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PROGRESSIVE TRIPURA.



H. H. Bishana-Samara-Bejayee Maha-Mohoday Pancha-Sreejukta Maharaja Manikya
Bir Bikram Kishore Deb Barman Bahadur.

1874

1875

PROGRESSIVE TRIPURA.



27386

BY

APURBA CHANDRA BHATTACHARYYA,
EDITOR, CHUNTA PRAKASH.



CALCUTTA.

1930

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SUDHA PRESS,

198-1, CORNWALLIS STREET, CALCUTTA.

To
MANYABAR RANA SAHIB BODH JUNG BAHADUR
Chief Secretary.

THIS BOOK IS DEDICATED
AS A TOKEN OF SINCERE REGARD.

AUTHOR'S NOTE.

It is not an absolutely new ground that is sought to be broken in this work as more writers than one have already narrated the history of the Tripura Ruling family. The only justification that may be pleaded on behalf of this humble work is that all such works are either in Sanskrit or Bengali, there being up till now not a single work which attempts to present in the English language a systematic history in chronological order of the events of this illustrious Ruling House from the pre-historic period down to the present times. There have, no doubt, been news paper articles here and there dealing with certain particular aspects of one Ruling Chief or another but that is hardly sufficient to present a complete picture of the achievements of this ancient Ruling House. To get together authentic materials for compiling a complete up-to-date history, separated from legends that invariably get woven round incidents, is no easy task.

Rajmala ends with the regime of Maharaja Kashi Chandra. *Rajmala* as compiled by the late Babu Kailash Chandra Sinha concludes with only a brief reference to the events of the reigns of Maharaja Krishna Kishore, successor of Kashi Chandra, Maharaja Ishan Chandra and Maharaja Birchandra Manikya. The story has been fully carried on in this work from where the *Rajamala* left it and the narration of incidents of the latter part of the reign of Bir Chandra as well as that of Maharaja Radhakishore Manikya, Maharaja Birendra Kishore Manikya and the present ruler is exclusively our own collection. It appears that from the reign of Krishna Kishore the State chroniclers were busy in re-editing and compiling the *Rajamala* and hence no systematic attempt has been made to continue the record of events after Maharaja Krishna Kishore in black and white. Our task has therefore been extremely difficult. Since the work was taken in hand unforeseen difficulties came in our way and hindered our progress to a considerable extent. In the circumstances it is natural that the book has not been entirely free from blemishes. If however, any opportunity presents itself of bringing out a second edition, attempts will be made to eliminate these defects as far as practicable.

I take this opportunity of expressing my heartfelt gratitude to Dewan Saheb K. P. Dutt M. A. B. L. M. R. A. S. (London) Private Secretary to His Highness the Maharaja Manikya Bahadur who has furnished me with all papers and records regarding the legislature and also photos from the State archives. The advice and help of my friend Mr. Bidhu Bhusan

Sen-Gupta, Editor, Free Press of India, was simply indispensable to me. I had a right to claim his assistance at every step and my hearty thanks are naturally due to him for all he has done to lighten my labours. I had to indent upon the kindness of many others for information and materials in connection with this work. Among them following names should be particularly mentioned :— Pandit Kali Prasanna Sen Bidyabhushan, Mr. Satya Ranjan Bose B. A.—Under Secretary, Mr. Subodh Chandra Mukherjee B. A.—Personal Clerk to His Highness, and Mr. Syama Charan Chakravarty—State Artist.

I feel I cannot close this note of thanks without making, however briefly, a reference to Babu Ramanath Chakravarty, Pleader, High Court, Agartala. I need not try to describe how each of them helped me to complete this work. But I will say only this that without their sincere desire to stand by me I could not have discharged the duty I voluntarily accepted. My thanks are due to all of them.

CALCUTTA
25th Sept. 1930.

}

A. C. BHATTACHARYYA.

INTRODUCTION.

The history of Tripura State whose rulers claim their descent from legendary heroes of the Lunar dynasty is a story not only of solid achievements but of great human interest. There is hardly any Ruling House in India which can claim the privilege of 2,840 years of uninterrupted rule and has stood the ravages of times and shocks of wars, intrigues and revolutions so successfully and which has kept intact its ancient traditions and at the same time adapted itself to progressive changes so wonderfully. *Rajamala* which is a mixture of legend and history chronicles the story of this historic house in such a wealth of details that it has even evoked the admiration of Western scholars. Rev. James Long in his analysis of *Rajamala* (printed in Asiatic Society's journal in 1850) has referred to the book in eloquent terms as a document of great historical importance. It is a critical review of the achievements of Tripura Rulers. Long rightly says that *Rajamala* is "a curiosity as presenting us with the oldest specimen of Bengali composition extant, the first part of it having been compiled in the beginning of the 15th century."

The present Ruler Maharaja Bir Bikram Kishore Manikya Bahadur whose accession in 1927 has raised great expectations in the minds of the people is the 153rd Ruler from Daitya whose great-grandson Trilochan attended the *Rajshuya Jagna* of Emperor Judhishthir. Writing about Tripura kings Rai Bahadur Dr. Dinesh Chandra Sen says :—"From Saka 1380 to Saka 1850 we have a substantially correct history of the Tippera Raj which, in my opinion, presents materials far more trustworthy than the *Raj Tarangini* of Kalhan. The most attractive feature of the *Rajamala* lies in the charm of its descriptions, where facts are recorded in a fascinating style lending a living interest to the account of events that have transpired in the different epochs of Tripura history "

The twenty third pillar inscriptions of Samudra Gupta make mention of Tripura as a powerful State. This is unassailable evidence that Tripura was a flourishing State in the fourth century A. D. During this long period the history of Tripura is mainly an unbroken record of brilliant military victories in which several heroic and patriotic queens also played a prominent part. The name of the queen of Chhengthum Fa who led the Tripura army against the Emperor of Gour and annexed Meherkul after inflicting a crushing defeat will ever live in history as a record of glorious achievement.

Tripura Rulers have most of them been high priests of culture and the patronage bestowed by them for the culture of Bengali language forms an interesting chapter in the history of Tripura which found and still find frequent manifestations not only in the help rendered to literary men and literary institutions but also in the keen interest taken by the Rulers themselves in literary pursuits.

The author of *Progressive Tripura* has in this decent volume presented within a short compass this interesting story from the legendary period down to the present times in a manner worthy of his past success recorded in the pages of *Chunta Prakash*. In this book facts have been separated from legends with a critical analysis of events based on solid foundations of history and the story has been carried on with conspicuous ability from where the *Rajamala* left it. Thus from the point of view of a connected story of Tripura House the book has great historical importance and so far as the Modern Period is concerned contains a record of events which, I am confident, will afford ample interesting materials for future historians. The progress recorded in *Progressive Tripura* does not consist in the military achievements and conquests of the ancient period, the necessity for external defence having disappeared with the assumption of control of the same by the Paramount Power, but in the record of liberal dispensation of the fruits of peace viz, education, sanitation, arts, literature, industry and commerce and the utilisation of the resources of the State for the welfare and happiness of the people. For a proper appreciation of the sincere efforts of the author for the presentation of Tripura history in an intelligible form down to the present Ruler, for the first time in English, the reader is referred to the fascinating story that is unfolded in the subsequent pages.

CALCUTTA,
FREE PRESS OF INDIA,
27th September, 1930.

}

B. SEN GUPTA.

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Genealogy of Tripura Ruling Family.



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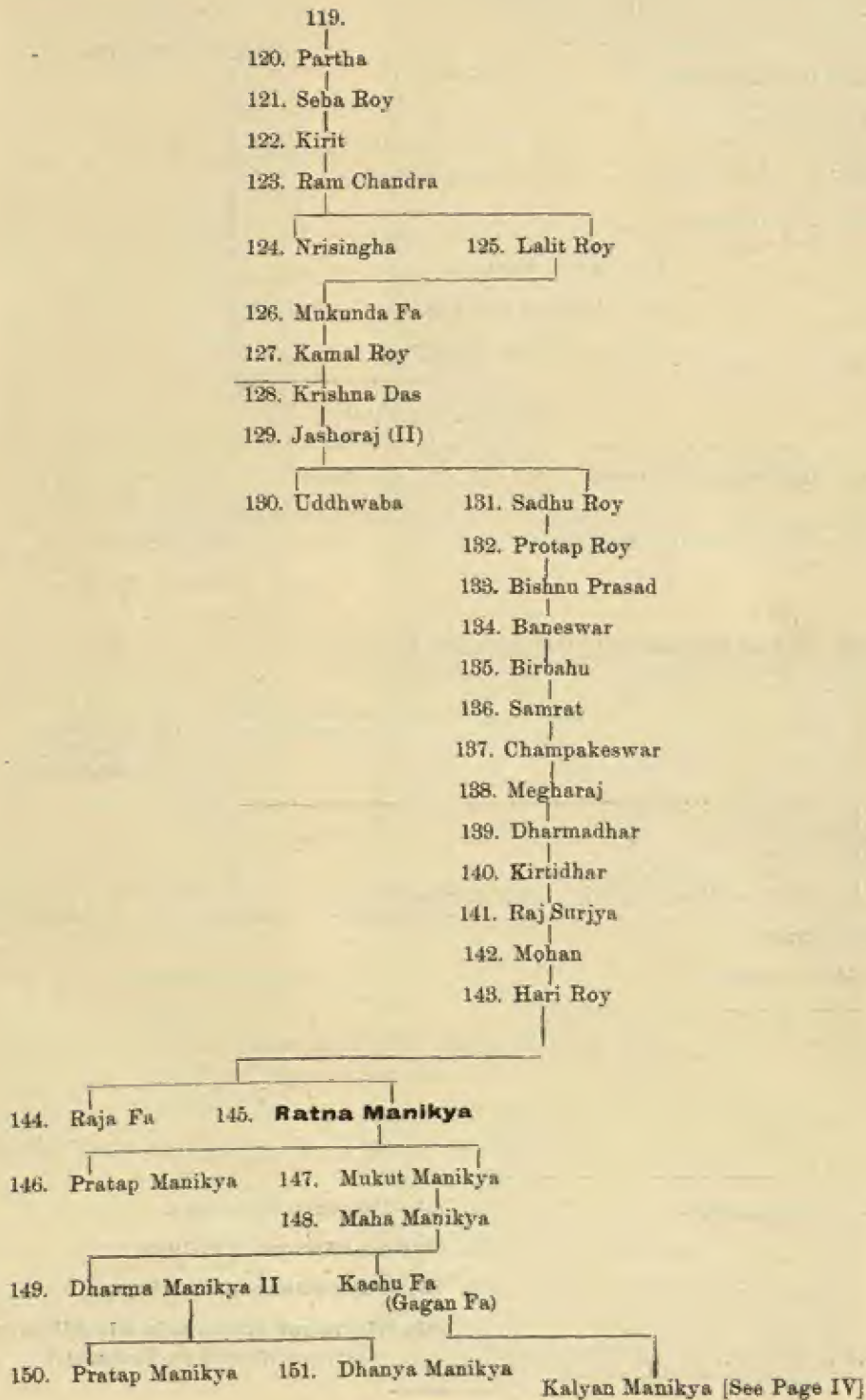
- 2. Budha
- 3. Pururaba
- 4. Ayu
- 5. Nahush
- 6. Jajati
- 7. **Druhyu**
- 8. Babhru
- 9. Setu
- 10. Aradban
- 11. Gandhar
- 12. Dharma
- 13. Dhrita
- 14. Durmada
- 15. Pracheta
- 16. Parachi
- 17. Parabasu
- 18. Parishad
- 19. Arijit
- 20. Sujit
- 21. Pururaba
- 22. Bibarna
- 23. Puru Sen
- 24. Meghavarna
- 25. Bikarna
- 26. Basuman
- 27. Kirti

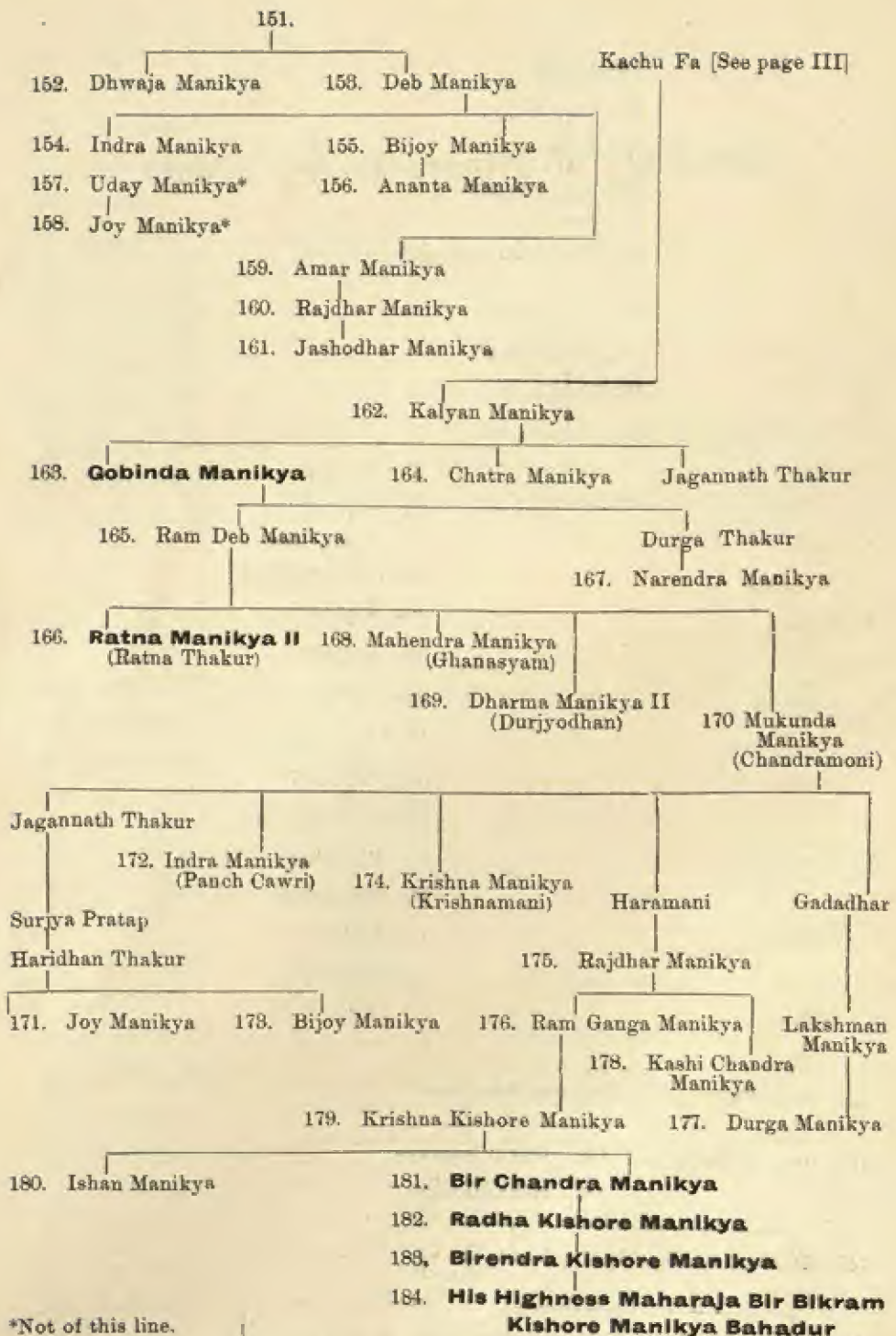
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- 33. Pramatha
- 34. Kalinda
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- 41. Bhanumitra
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 97. Indrakirti
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 99. Surendra (Achang Fa)
 100. Bimar
 101. Kumar
 102. Sukumar
 103. Bir Chandra
 104. Rajyeswar
 105. Nageswar (III)
 106. Taichang Fa
 107. Narendra
 108. Indrakirti
 109. Biman
 110. Jasho Raj
 111. Banga
 112. Ganga Rai
 113. Chitra Sen II
 114. Pratit
 115. Marichi
 116. Gagan
 117. Kirti II
 118. Himati
 119. Rajendra





[illegible]

First page of original Bengali Rajmala.

[illegible]

Last page of original Bengali Rajmala.



Coat Of Arms of Tripura State.

PROGRESSIVE TRIPURA.

CHAPTER I.

Descendants of Lunar Dynasty.

It is a very difficult task to string together a systematic story of the ancient dynasties of Kings and Princes of India. In ancient India the custom of preserving geneological tables was not widely prevalent. As a result the history of many notable figures and families is now buried beyond reclamation in the dead past. But happily such a fate was not reserved for the princes of Tripura State. In Tripura State from time immemorial the duty of recording geneological tables rested on family priests and some form of historical record has therefore been kept of the princes of Tripura and handed down from generation to generation. *Rajamala*, the history of the kings of Tripura, is based on the records preserved by these priests. *Rajamala* goes so far back as to contain a description of Maharaj Daitya. Therefore to trace the geneology of Tripura princes up to king Daitya is a comparatively easy task. The second contemporary literature on the subject is *Raj Ratnakar*. It appears that this book was written even a few years before the *Rajamala*. *Raj Ratnakar* contains records of all princes from king *Druhya*. Records of kings coming before *Druhya* are chronicled in the Mahabharata and Sastrie literature. From these books it can be easily ascertained that *Druhya* is the seventh King from *Chandra* (Moon). This is an incontestable proof that the kings of Tripura traced their descent from Chandra (Lunar) Dynasty.

It is to be regretted that without relying on these easy methods of compiling a history of the geneology, some historians have expressed erroneous views. This is perhaps due to the attempts of some officials who wanted to pose as historians and were unwilling to make a diligent study of the ancient records. Mr. Hunter in his *Statistical Accounts of Bengal* has designated this dynasty of Tripura kings as Tibeto-Burmans. That this is a conclusion based on imagination, pure and simple, will be apparent from a perusal of Sastrie texts and ancient historical documents. Several others who have followed Hunter have simply echoed his sentiments without even taking care to look into the geneological tables prepared from ancient records. Reynold in his *Tribes of the Eastern Frontier* has stated that "from physical features it appears that the Tripuris are near kinsmen of the *Khasias*." We do not like to question the authority of a great antiquarian like Reynold but he ought not to have expressed such a view without assigning sufficient reasons. There are not only not a single ground in favour of Hunter's conclusions, but on the other hand there are heaps of evidence to prove that his conclusions are erroneous. In the circumstances there is no other alternative but to reject his theory.

Anthropology, though a comparatively new science in Europe, was in vogue in ancient India. In the *Puranas* and other ancient books there are numerous passages containing physiological descriptions of different races and peoples. From this it appears the system of ascertaining race and genus from an observation of customs, manners as well as anatomical and physical features was also prevalent in ancient India. *Rajamala* which was written 500 years back contains an elaborate description of physical features of princes of Tripura. It says that the members of this dynasty of princes are very fair in colour, medium in stature, dignified in demeanour, strong in physique and stout in build. They have medium nose, proportionate ears, round face, heavy and stiff arms and a spirited bearing. This description of the people of Tripura does not in any way corres

pond to that of the people of Burmah or of Khasia Hills but tally with that of the Aryan and pure Kshatriya stock. Even if this question is discussed in the manner in which great antiquarians like *Clark* and *Todd* have done in deciding the stock of ancient peoples, we cannot but come to the conclusion that the Tripura Raj dynasty belongs to Aryan Kshatriya stock. *Rajamala* and *Raja Ratnakar* are replete with accounts of piety, charity, prowess and other various qualities of head and heart of Tripura Kings indicating their Aryan origin. That the conclusions of European historians and Indian research students who have followed in their foot-prints and have described Tripura kings as of Tibeto-Burman stock, are erroneous will be further apparent from actual observation and this also shows that the physical features and the customs of the people of Tripura have nothing in common with those belonging to the Tibeto-Burman stock. There are incontestable proofs in *Rajamala* and *Raja Ratnakar* as also in the *Mahabharata* and *Puranas* to show that after the foundation of the kingdom by Druhyu, the founder of Tripura dynasty, its capital had been shifted from one place to another and the boundary of the kingdom was extended or contracted several times, but the original line of kings continued to hold the reins of Government. The geneological table that has been preserved in the Tripura palace contains names of all kings from Druhyu down to the present Ruler. Druhyu was the third son of King Emperor Jajati. Nahusha was Jajati's father, Ayu was the father of Nahush, Purarava of Ayu, Bodh of Purarava and Chandra (Moon) of Bodh. Thus this dynasty of kings is called the great Lunar Dynasty. The geneological table published elsewhere shows the uninterrupted continuity of the long line of Tripura Kings from *Chandra* (Moon). The great Epic *Mahabharata* and the *Puranas* are replete with the golden deeds of the kings of the Lunar dynasty, while *Rajamala* and *Rajaratnakar* contain details of the achievements of the later kings of Tripura. The record of the present-day Rulers of Tripura is as brilliant as was the glorious past of their ancestors.

Tripura, the oldest State in India.

Among the Indian States Tripura is by far the most ancient. The State has, through numerous vicissitudes of time, been able to maintain its individuality and integrity up to the present time. The *Mahabharata* and the *Puranas* show that this State was established 3000 years before Christ. *Rajamala*, the historical chronicle of the later kings of Tripura, says that the kings of this State took up arms on behalf of Duryyodhana against the Pandavas at the famous battle of *Kurukshetra*. In the description in the *Mahabharata* of the military arrangement made by Bhishma occurs mention of Tripura. Sanskrit *Rajamala* says that at the *Rajashuya* ceremony of Emperor Yudhisthir the king of Tripura was present and was accorded a high place of honour by Yudhisthir. It is stated in the *Mahabharata* that the *Kirats* were present at the *Rajashuya* Ceremony. The Kings of Tripura had long before this conquered the Kirat country. The *Kirats* were, therefore, there as retinue of the King of Tripura. The *Mahabharata* also tells us that Karna conquered Tripura in course of one of his military campaigns. *Rajamala* also contains numerous other accounts in which Maharaja Trilochan of Tripura has been described as a contemporary of Emperor Yudhisthir. Some historians regard Tripura father of Trilochan as a contemporary of Yudhisthir. The battle of *Kurukshetra* is an incident of *Dwapar Yuga*. Emperor Yudhisthir gave up his mortal being just at the approach of *Kali Yuga*. This is the 5030th year of *Kali Yuga*. It shows that the Tripura State existed about 3000 years before Christ. *Bhishmaya Purana* (Brahma Khanda), a very ancient authority also makes mention of Tripura State. This establishes only the antiquity of Tripura State. In *Pithmala Tantra* Tripura has been mentioned as a place where fell the right leg of *Sati* (wife of Shiva) and it is because of this the presiding deity of the land is called *Tripura Sundari*. The famous Chinese traveller Hiuen-Tsang in his travels has made mention of Kamalanka (Comilla) or Tripura. In his "Life and



Historic Throne of Tripura State.

SUDHA PRESS.—CALCUTTA.

Travels" Huen-Tsang says that he came to India at the beginning of the 7th century. At that time, he says Tripura was extended up to the sea coast. That the State attracted the attention of a foreigner shows that it was not a backward one. Kailash Chandra Sinha says in his *Rajamala* "the Stone inscriptions of Samudra Gupta show that the ruler of Tripura paid taxes along with the rulers of Bengal, Kamrup and Nepal," but the Gupta inscriptions which have been reclaimed by R. C. Dutt and published in facsimile in his book "Ancient India"—mention Tripura as *Kartipura*. There is no historical record of any state of that name having ever existed. The inevitable conclusion therefore is that "Kartipura" was a substitution for "Tripura". Samudra Gupta reigned in the 4th century A. D. The Gupta inscriptions testify how glorifying it was to receive contributions from Tripura State. Besides the sacred books, the glorious history of this ancient State is written in imperishable letters in the numerous old temples, buildings and other works of architecture which have still stood the ravages of times, though due to changes of capital many other such proofs must have been lost.

Foundation of Tripura State.

Tripura State was founded by Druhyu, a son of Emperor Jajati of the Lunar Dynasty. Jajati had *Pratisthanpur* as his capital. He had five sons, Jadu, Turbasu, Drupyu, Anu and Puru. His first four sons were excluded from sovereignty owing to insubordination and sent out to rule over different outlying principalities. There are different theories as to the places allotted to each. *Rajamala* edited by Pandit Kaliprasanna Sen Bidyabhusan contains a map of places occupied by the sons of Jajati which was prepared by Mahamahopadyaya Pandit Panchanan Tarkaratna. This shows that Druyyu went eastwards and his state extended from the Sundurbans as far as Burmah. Sanskrit *Rajamala* and *Raja Ratnakar* describe the victorious career of Druhyu which indicates that after leaving the capital (Prathisthanpur) he

proceeded along the banks of the Ganges towards the sea and came across a beautiful island named "Sagor" just at the confluence of the *Bhagirathi* and the sea where he set up his suzerainty. In course of time he extended his kingdom and brought several neighbouring rulers under his sway. His new kingdom was called "Tribeg" which was suggested probably owing to its facing the Ganges at a point where it had branched into three channels. But this place has undergone so many transformations that it is difficult now to locate it with any certainty. "Calcutta Review" No. XXXIV—contains the following suggestive lines :—

"Two hundred years before the foundation of Calcutta, it (Sagar Island) contained a population of 200,000 souls which in one night in 1688 was swept away by an innundation."

Hunter in his *Statistical Accounts of Bengal* has admitted this fact. The renowned historian Somerset Playne F. R. G. S. writes :—

"In ancient times there were on the Sagar Island a famous *Tol* (Sanskrit College) and a shrine of Shiva erected by the Rajas of Tripura....."

All these not only show that the Rulers of Tripura used to encourage learning and establishment of temples but also that the kingdom of Tripura extended as far as the Sagar Island.

At Barasit in Sunderbans there is an ancient Shiva temple with its idol called *Ambulinga* erected by the Tripura kings. The idol of Tripura Sundari at Satrabhug is also an achievement of Tripura kings. *Raja Ratnakar* states that this temple was established by king Kalinda of Tripura. The same book maintains that during 24 kings from Druhyu up to the time of Satrujit the capital of Tripura was at Sagar Island and that Satrujit's son Pratardan conquered the *Kirat* country and established the second capital of Tripura on the bank of Brahmaputra. During that period the whole country from the Sagar Island to

the Brahmaputra used to be called "Tribeg." Pratardan's son Pramatha and Pramatha's son Kalinda used to live alternately in Sagar and in the new capital.

In the Kirat country on the bank of the Gumti lies the very ancient and sacred temple of Tripura Sundari from very distant past. This place has acquired a sacred character due to the fact that the right leg of *Sati* (wife of Shiva) fell here. This temple still exists on a hillock some two miles from Udaypur, a divisional town of Tripura State.

Rev. J. Long mentions in Vol XIX of The Journal of Asiatic Society :—

"I saw in the Bibliotheque Rayale at Paris a Portuguese map of Bengal, drawn three centuries ago, which give the name of five cities to the east of Sagar Island on the border of the sea. The rivers in the Sundarbans confirm the description."

Besides, the Annals of Asia by De Barros, as well as the Map by Dunden Brooke clearly prove the existence along the sea coast near the Sundarbans, of five ports one of which was named *Tiparia*. That Tiparia is a transformation from Tripura and was set up by one of the rulers of the Tripura State is a reasonable conclusion. It further lends support to the statements of Sanskrit *Rajamala* and *Raja Ratnakar*, referred to above, that the suzerainty of the rulers of Tripura was at one time extended as far as the sea.

A short time ago the well-known historian Raya Manindra Deva Roy read in the Hooghly District Historical Association an article on the Researches into the antiquity of Hooghly District, in course of which he made the following observations :—"The high and broad embankment with shady trees on either side from Tribeni to Mahanad used now for cart traffic known as Jamai Jangal is another place of considerable interest. It is said to have been constructed by the Raja of Mahanad for the convenience of his son-in-law, the son of Tripura Raj of Tribeni." From a perusal of the very large number of traditions

and popular sayings that have been introduced by Mr. Deb Roy in his learned article it appears that Tribeni within Hooghly district was a part of the Tripura State and that the rulers would from time to time come there on temporary sojourn.

All these prove the antiquity and greatness of the Tripura State of which the first capital was established in the Sagar Island near the Sundarbans by Druhyu, while the second capital was set up by king Pratardan on the bank of the Kapila, a branch of the Brahmaputra, after his conquest of the Kiratas.

CHAPTER II.

Pre-Rajamala Period.

Druhyu is the first historical and by far the most important ruler of the dynasty. It was during his administration that fortune smiled upon the house of Tripura Raj. Druhyu succeeded in gaining the favours of sage Kapila and with his help conquered the Sagar Island and extended his territory, far and wide. It appears from the Puranas that 60,000 soldiers of King Sagar were defeated and destroyed by Druhyu. That king Sagar is an historical personage is borne out by writings even of modern research scholars. "Emperor Sagar's extensive foreign conquests are well-known. His conquest of the island of the Indian Archipelago is mentioned in the ancient traditions of these islands, where he is still worshipped as the God of the Sea." (Hindu Superiority Page 193). It can be accepted that this historical Sagar who conquered the islands of the Indian Archipelago was identical with the Pauranic Sagar whose misfortune it was to incur the displeasure of sage Kapila leading to the destruction of his kingdom.

Druhyu was succeeded by his son Bavru—an equally powerful and good ruler upon whom the title of King was conferred with due ceremony by sage Kapila and ever since this

proud title has been assumed by the successive rulers of the line. Bavru was a successful king and his conquests extended far beyond the boundaries of Bengal. *Rijaratnakar* tells us that he conquered the countries up to the river Baitarani in Orissa, added a portion of Burmah to his vast kingdom and brought the sea (Bay of Bengal) under his control.

Bavru was succeeded by his son Setu who was a pious and gifted ruler. Great religious activities marked his administration.

Setu's son Aradban was also a good and popular ruler like his father. Prosperity and contentment prevailed throughout his beneficent rule. He performed an Aswamedha ceremony which was largely attended and brought him great renown. During the latter part of his rule Aradban left the reins of administration in the hands of his son Gandhara and assumed the life of a Yogi spending the remaining portion of his life in meditation.

Gandhara carried his military expeditions beyond the Indus and named the provinces newly conquered as Gandhar-Rayya. Gandhara was followed by Dharma, Dhrita and Durmad all of whom were popular rulers spending their time and energy for the welfare of their subjects.

The seventh king Pracheta, son of Durmad, was an ideal ruler. Out of the total revenue he would give away half for the benefit of his subjects, one-sixth for the maintenance of relations of the Royal family and the balance would go to the Treasury.

After Pracheta his son Parachi ascended the Throne. Parachi was a skilful archer and had a great ambition for conquests. He started out on an expedition to the foreign territories in the north accompanied by his brothers leaving his son Parabasu in charge of the administration. But he did never return. Parabasu was followed by Parishad, Arijit, Sujit, Pururaba, Bibarna and Purusen.

King Purusen, fifteenth in the line from Bavru, attended the *Aswamedha Jajna* (Horse Sacrifice) of Emperor Dasaratha of Ayodhya, with a large retinue of princes and soldiers and

accompanied by many *Rishis* well-versed in the Vedas. Purusen's son Meghavarna was a great king, a patron of learning and well-known for his benevolence. He established throughout his dominion a large number of charitable dispensaries, schools and libraries and thus discharged the duties of a true king by causing education to be spread among the rank and file of his people.

Meghavarna was followed by Bikarna, Basuman, Kirti, Kanian, Pratisraba, Pratistha and Satrujit—all of whom were popular rulers. Satrujit sent his son Pratardhan to the hermitage of Viswamitra for religious training and after his return Satrujit took to Banaprastha.

Among one hundred and eleven kings who ruled successively after Bavru, King Pratardhan, the 25th lineal descendant of Bavru, stands out most prominent. It is he who enlarged the Empire by the conquest of the Kirat country after 14 long days' terrible fighting. Reference has already been made to the second capital built by Pratardhan on the bank of the Kapila river and these newly-acquired provinces were named "Tribeg" after the old capital. Kaliprasanna Sen's *Rajmala* has it that king Pratardhan conquered the entire tract of land which is bounded on the north by the Brahmaputra, on the south by Rangamati (Chittagong Hills), on the east by Manipur and on the west by Cooch Behar. This, it must be admitted on all hands, was no mean achievement.

Pratardhan was succeeded by his son Pramatha. Pramatha's son Kalinda is famous as the founder of the temple of Tripura Sundari in the Sundarbans. Kalinda was followed by his son Krama and the latter by Mitrari.

The progress of this powerful kingdom received its first check during the rule of Mitrari, 28th king after Bavru, when a temporary set-back was caused by internal feuds between the ministers and the king who unlike his predecessors was indifferent to the administration of the country and given to un-

seemly quarrels with the chief minister. This resulted in the revolt of the chief minister who occupied the old Tripura Rayya and declared himself king there. This marks the beginning of a gloomy period in the history of Tripura and the loss sustained by the unwisdom of Mitrari could never be made good in subsequent years by his successors.

Then came Mitrari's son Baribarha, who made several unsuccessful attempts to re conquer the old kingdom. He had to be satisfied with only the Kirat country. Baribarha was followed by Karmuk. He was a warrior king and is stated to have faught several battles.

After the death of King Karmuk, grandson of Mitrari, who met a hero's death fearlessly fighting in the battle field, passed a number of uneventful years. In spite of the earnest efforts of some of the kings who left no stone unturned to bring the country to its pristine glory, it appeared that they were destined never to rise again. With the ascendancy of Chitrayudha on the throne opens the darkest chapter in the history of Tripura. Chitrayudha was a king possessed of administrative capacities and warlike disposition. He loved his subjects and was loved and esteemed by them in return. But his martial spirits took him frequently to the battle fields where he found his ultimate repose along with his younger brother who followed him. Their untimely death strengthened the hands of the enemy and the minor king was forced to run away from the country with his mother and seek refuge at the hermitage of sage Gautama.

Chitrayudha's third brother Daitya learnt archery from Aswathwama, son of the renowned archer Drona of the Mahabharata fame and recovered the kingdom of his forefathers.

CHAPTER III

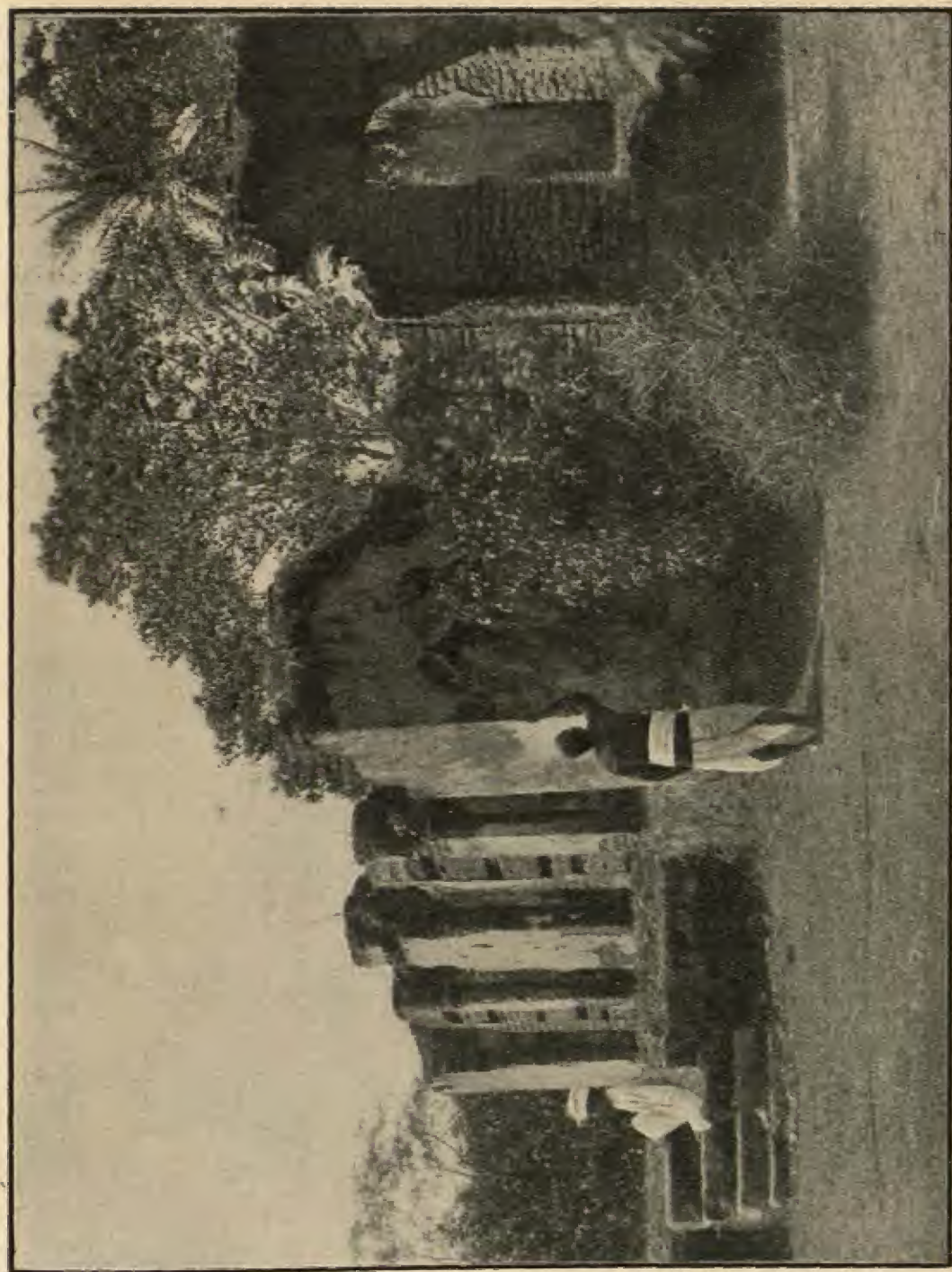
Rajamala Period.

The return of Daitya, a direct and lawful descendant of the Tripura Raj family, caused universal jubilation among the people, and the old ministers accorded him a most cordial welcome and rendered him all possible help to get himself re-instated on the throne. Daitya soon became an object of pride to the people by conquering Assam and Malla Desha, and thus reviving the lost glory of Tripura.

Daitya's successor Tripur was an unusual departure from the traditional characteristics of the Tripur Raj family. He was cruel, self-willed and oppressive. He banned the worship of any gods and goddesses excepting the king himself. This had its inevitable effect. The people rose up in arms and put the king to death. This Tripur who changed the name of the Kirat country to Tripura is said to be a contemporary of king Judhithira. That Tripur's son Trilochan was present at the Rajasuya Jajna of Emperor Judhithira is borne out by the Mahabharata.

The reign of Trilochan is historically very important for more than one reason. The images of fourteen gods and goddesses set up by him are even now to be found at old Agartala and bear testimony to the founder's deep piety. It was from the time of his coronation that "Chandrathwaja" and "Trishula-dhwaja" came to be in use among the kings of Tripura as the Royal Insignia. Trilochan also brought under subjugation the Kaifang, Chakma, Khulong, Longai, Tonan, Taiyang, Riyang, Thanangchi and other Hill Tribes. Trilochan married the daughter of the King of Heramba (modern Cachar) who died leaving no male issue. Trilochan's first son Drikpati (Bir Sen) therefore ascended the throne left vacant by his maternal grandfather.

Trilochan was succeeded by his second son Dakshmin. Dakshmin divided his father's hoarded wealth into twelve portions. He kept two portions for himself and gave one each



Ruins of the Temple of Chaturdash Devata (Fourteen Gods) at Udaypur.

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Trilochan was succeeded by his second son Dakshmin. Dakshmin divided his father's hoarded wealth into twelve portions. He kept two portions for himself and gave one each

to his ten younger brothers. This enraged the eldest brother, the ruler of Heramba, who also claimed the throne as well as the wealth of his father. On the refusal of his younger brothers to part with the kingdom he led a big expedition and attacked the capital. Unable to resist the onslaught of his eldest brother King Dakshmin accompanied by his other brothers fled with the throne to a place called Khalangma. The ruler of Heramba, therefore, declared himself king at the old capital.

After Dakshmin, his son Taidakshmin ascended the throne. He married the daughter of the King of Manipur. After Taidakshmin 41 kings ruled one after another up to Nagapati. *Rajamala* does not contain any description of their achievements and activities. Nagapati was succeeded by his son Sikhiraj. In both Sanskrit and Bengali *Rajamala* there is a novel story current as to how he was served with a dish of human flesh. It is stated that Sikhiraj went out on a hunting excursion but had to get back to the tent disappointed. He at once ordered his cook to prepare a meat diet. Failing to secure meat the cook prepared the dish with human flesh. The King relished the dish very much but as soon as he learnt that he was served with human flesh he was repentent and renounced the world as a penance.

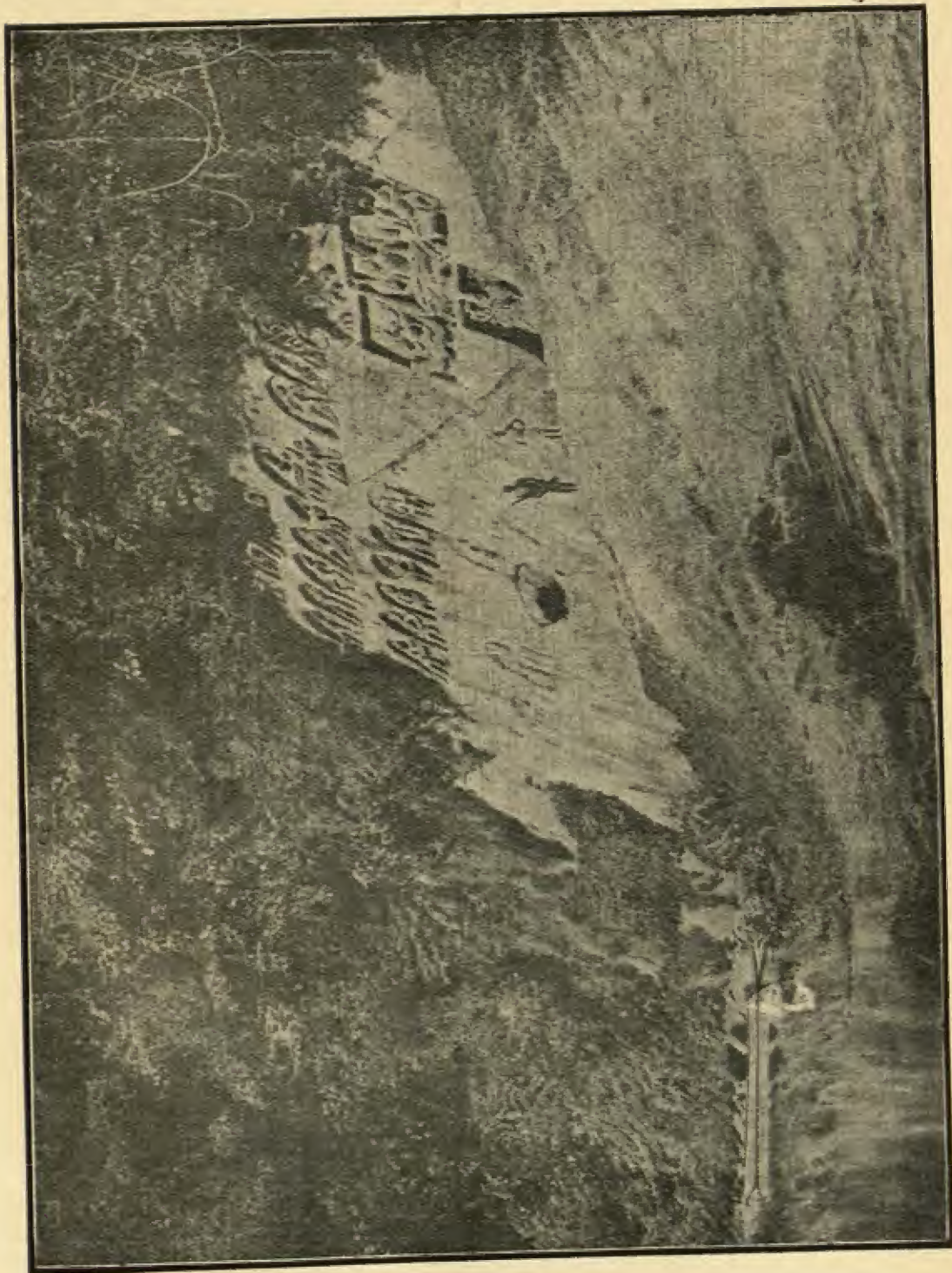
Sikhiraj was followed by Debaraj, Dhusranga, Barakirti (Biraj), Sagar Fa, Malaychandra, Surja Narayan, Bir Singha, Surendra (Achang Fa) and Bimar. Bimar's son, King Kumar was a devoted Saiva. He spent his last days in deep meditation in the temple of God Siva at Chhambul Nagar which is now identified with the temple of Unakoti Siva near Kailasabar.

Kumar was followed by Sukumar, Birchandra, Rajyeswar, Taichang Fa, Narendra, Indrakirti, Biman, Jashoraj, Banga, Ganga Roy, and Chitra Sen (Ohhakru Roy).

Chitra Sen's son Pratit (107th ruler after Bavru) entered into an offensive and defensive treaty with the king of Heramba by defining the boundaries of both kingdoms, and thus made up the old quarrel. Pratit was followed by Malchhi (Marichi), Kakut (Gagan), Nowrai (Kirti) and Hamtar Fa.



Ruins of the Siva image found carved in the rocks at the Unakoti Shrine near Kailashahar,
(Chhambalnagar)



Figures of Gods and Goddesses found inscribed in the rocks known as Devatamura near the boundary of Udaypar & Anarpar divisions.



Hamtar Fa was a noteworthy ruler. To his credit lies the conquest of the Leekas - a neat and clean race of people residing in the land lying to the east of Rangamati (the Chittagong Hill Tracts). This successful expedition against the Leekas won him the proud title of Judhya or Hero and no wonder that for the people of Tripura the event has a special charm. From this time the old capital at Khalangma was left uncared for, as the king built his new capital at Rangamati and continued to govern therefrom. His son Jange Fa or Rajendra was no less successful than his father. According to *Rajamala* the entire tract of land lying between the Feni and Mohuri rivers on the one side and the Laksha river on the other was brought in his time under the subjugation of Tripura.

King Chhengthum Fa or Kirtidhar is the 21st ruler after Jangefa. The most noticeable event during his reign is the annexation of Meherkul by his queen who inflicted a heavy defeat on the king of Gour to whose territory it belonged. Hira-bant Khan, a ruler under Chhengthum Fa, took over charge of the government of Meherkul from the King of Gour on payment of a boat-load of riches. This enraged King Chhengthum Fa who annexed the province to his kingdom. When this was brought to the notice of the king of Gour, a large army was despatched immediately for the punishment of the Tripura Raj. Chhengthum Fa got terrified and was about to negotiate a humiliating treaty. But queen Tripura Sundari following in the foot-steps of many other Indian heroines at critical junctures appeared on the scene and drove away the invading forces from Meherkul. According to Sanskrit *Rajamala* this furious battle was fought with the Emperor of Delhi, but no mention is to be found of the name either of the king of Gour or of the Emperor of Delhi. Pandit Kali Prasanna Sen Vidyabhushan after making a comparative study of different historical works has concluded that the battle of Meherkul was fought in the year 1280 A. D. with Keshab Sen, the then king of Gour.

Chhenthum Fa died soon after the victorious battle of

Meherkul and was followed by Achang (Raja Surya), Khichung (Mohan) and Dangar Fa (Hari Roy).

From this time on words the kings of Tripura came into frequent clash with the Mahomedan rulers of Gour, one of whom played the important part of giving shelter to a refugee Tripura Prince named Ratna Fa. His charming manners and uncommon intelligence pleased the king of Gour who helped him to regain the throne of Tripura. Out of gratitude for this Ratna Fa presented his patron, the king of Gour, with a precious Manikya (Jewel) together with 100 big elephants which abound in the hills of Tripura. The king of Gour in return conferred the title of Manikya upon Ratna Fa and the kings of Tripura have been using it as a suffix to their names ever since.

Dawn of a New Era.

The reign of Ratna Fa or Ratna Manikya saw the dawn of a new era in Tripura both socially and politically. A good many innovations were introduced in the country and the machinery of administration was reformed after the Mahomedan fashion. For the cultural improvement of the people and reconstruction of society on up-to-date ideals, he brought from Lakshanabati, the capital of Gour, some eminent Brahmins and Kayesthas to Tripura. Of them one Khandav Ghosh and one Pandit Raj—two notable Kayesthas, were entrusted with ministerial charge and to Joy Narayan Sen of the Dhannantari family was made over the charge of the medical department. Moreover, during this period a host of Brahmins, Baidyas and Kayesthas came from different parts of Bengal and got permanently settled in Tripura. Some of them, the *Rajamala* says, came from the land of the well-known Bara Bhuiya or the twelve Zamindars of Bengal.

During the reign of Pratap Manikya, son of Ratna Manikya, the capital of Bengal was transferred to Subarnagram. This brought the Mahomedans into closer touch with Tripura and in 1347 A. D. Samsuddin, the Pathan Sultan, invaded Tripura and



Figures of Gods and Goddesses found inscribed in the rocks known as Devatanura near the boundary of Udaypur and Anarpur Divisions.



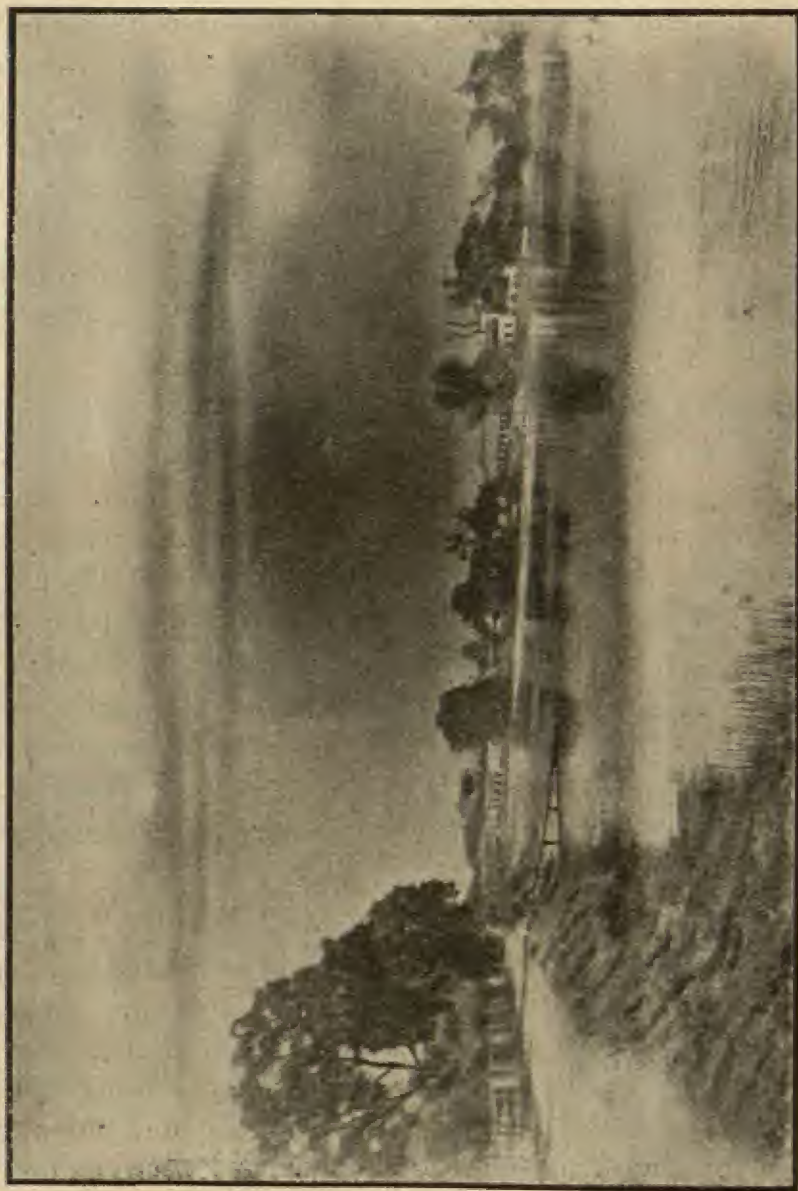
took away as booty some elephants and money. Mahomedan historians have with pride mentioned this as a conquest of Tripura but it seems to be an exaggeration pure and simple.

Pratap Manikya having died without any issue, his brother Mukut Manikya ascended the throne. He established friendly relations with the ruler of Arakan. He was succeeded by his son Maha Manikya. He was a pious king well-read in the Sastras. He had five sons the eldest of whom Dharma renounced the world and went out on a pilgrimage. The remaining four brothers started a quarrel over the succession after their father's death. This disgusted the people and messengers were sent out in quest of the eldest brother.

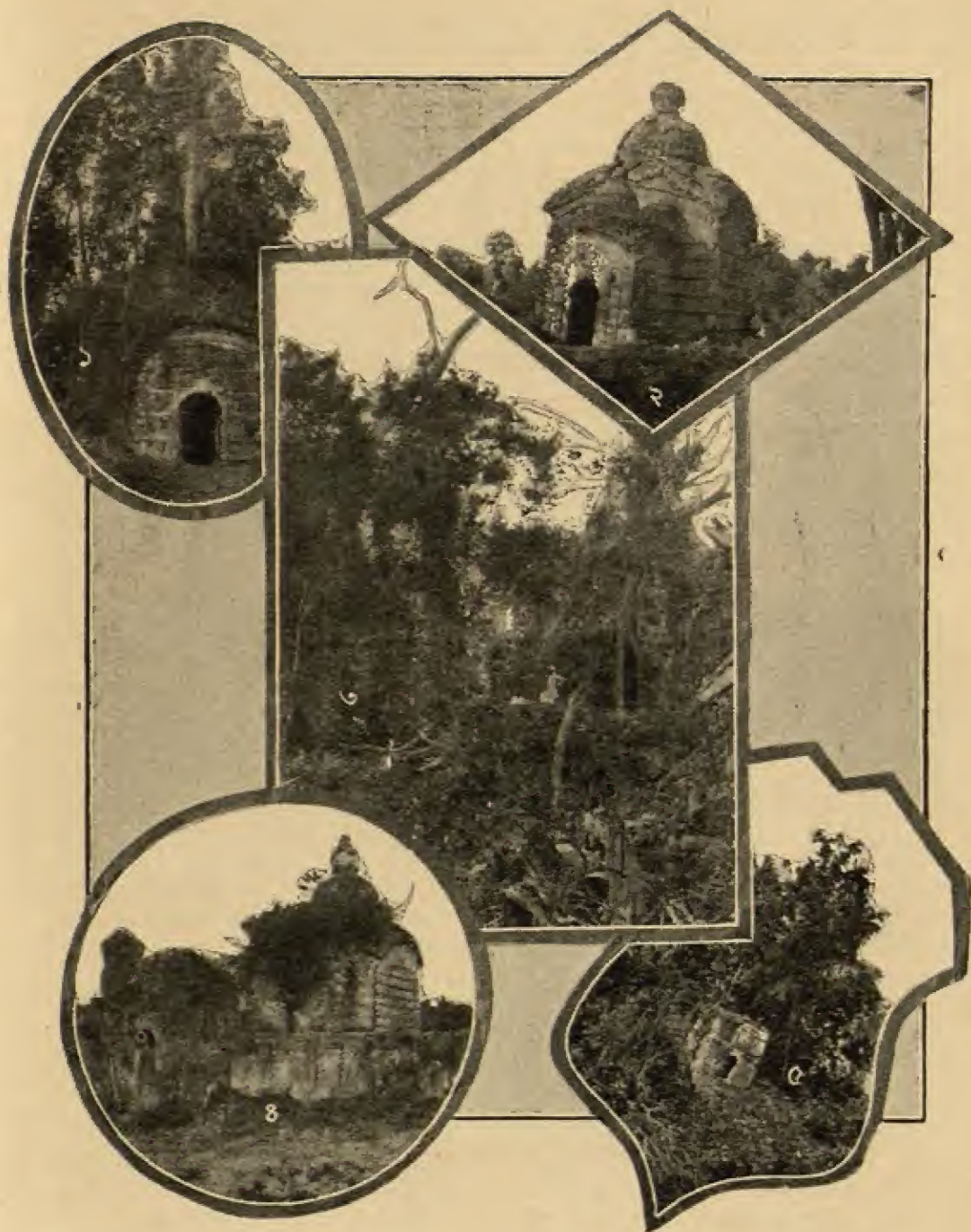
Dharma had just then after touring over several places, reached Benares. An interesting story is current as to how his future succession as King was foretold by a Brahmin. Dharma was one noon sleeping on the Mani-Karnika Ghat when a big poisonous snake was found shielding him from the sun with its hood. A Kanauj Brahmin who observed this unusual spectacle approached Dharma and made the prediction that Dharma would soon have the good fortune of becoming a King and offered to follow him to his country. Just then the messengers from Tripura reached Benares and broke the news of his father's death and his succession to the throne. Dharma hurried back home and ascended the throne.

Dharma Manikya ruled from 1431 to 1462 A. D. His Government was characterised by all-round peace and prosperity. The well-known tank *Dharmasagar* of Comilla was excavated by him while *Nanuar Digghi* another well-known tank of that city was excavated by his Queen Nanua. The most note worthy event of his reign was his invasion of Bengal under Sultan Abul Mujahed Ahmed Shah, and the plunder of Subarnagram, the capital of the Nawab.

About this time Mengchu Muang, the ruler of Arakan, was dethroned by the King of Burmah and took refuge at the Court of



Dharmasagar the famous tank of Comilla excavated by Dharma Manikya.



The Temples of Dhanya Manikya.

Tripura. Dharma Manikya helped him with men and money and got him reinstated.

Dharma Manikya had two sons—Dhanya and Pratap. After Dharma's death followed a scramble for the throne. As is usual, Commanders of the army took a leading part in this affair. By a conspiracy Dhanya was deprived of the throne and the younger brother Pratap was made King but he was soon put to death. With a view to save the life of Dhanya his nurse kept him hidden in the house of the Raj priest. Coming to know of this the Commander-in-Chief found him out and put him on the throne in 1490 A. D and gave his daughter Kamala in marriage with him.

With a view to consolidate his power and place his throne on a firmer footing, Dhanya Manikya reorganised the Army and introduced many reforms. The old generals who aspired to, and practically did, for some time control the affairs of Government were removed and put to death and new posts of different grades were created and filled up by able officers.

After re-organising his Army, Dhanya turned his attention towards the conquest of Bengal, and within a short time conquered Meherkul, Patikara, Ganga-Mondal, Bagasair, Bejura, Bhanugach, Bishmajuri, Longla, Bardakhat, etc. but the ruler of Khandal did not accept the subjugation of Tripura. He captured the Governor of Tripura and sent him as a captive to the King of Gour, who got him trampled to death by an elephant. This naturally enraged Dhanya Manikya who sent his Commander Roy Kachag to Khandal. By clever diplomacy Roy Kachag brought the 12 landholders of Khandal before Dhanya Manikya and got them assassinated. Khandal then came under the subjugation of Tripura.

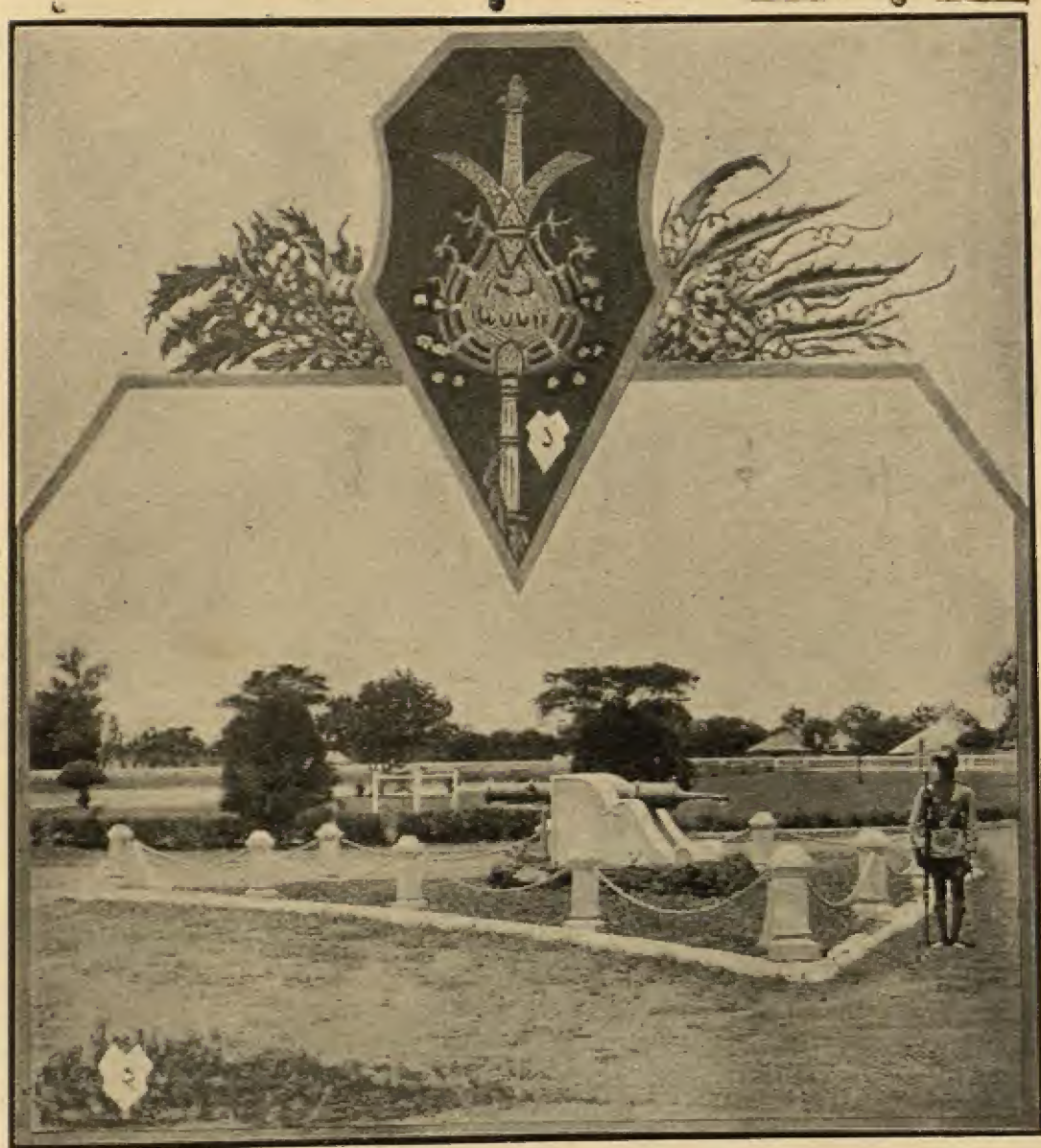
At this time a quarrel arose with the Kukees over the possession of a white elephant. The Kukees occupied the deep forest called Thanangchi lying to the east of Tripura and west of the Lushai Hills. Tripura soldiers under Roy Kachag poured over

the Kukee land and occupied the territory and also extorted the allegiance of the Kukees in the Lushai Hills. This expedition extended the boundary of the Tripura State upto the frontiers of Burmah.

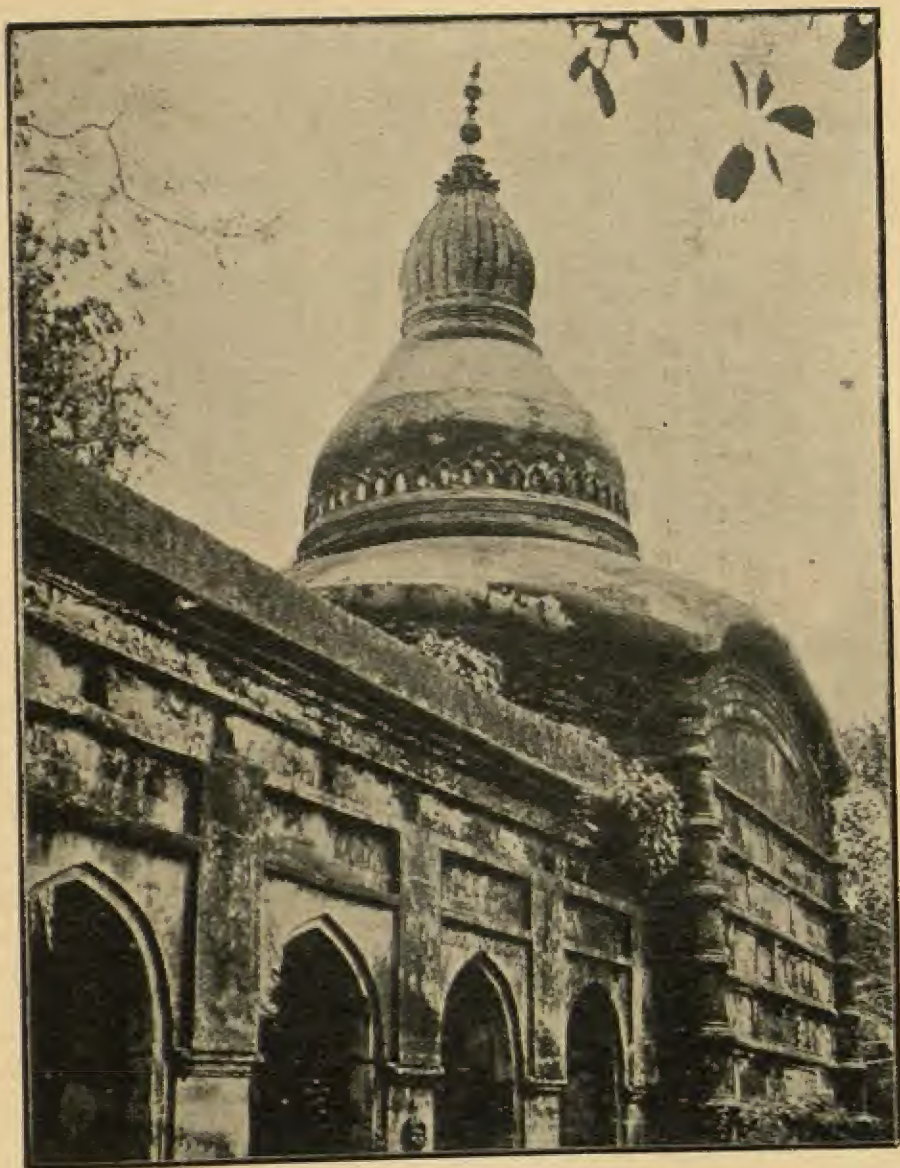


Ruins of the Palace of Dhanya Manikya at Udaypur.

The war of Dhanya Manikya with Hossein Shah, Nawab of Gour, for supremacy over Chittagong, is a most memorable



Banner & Gum of Hossein Shah captured by Dhanya Manikya are Preserved
at Agartola.

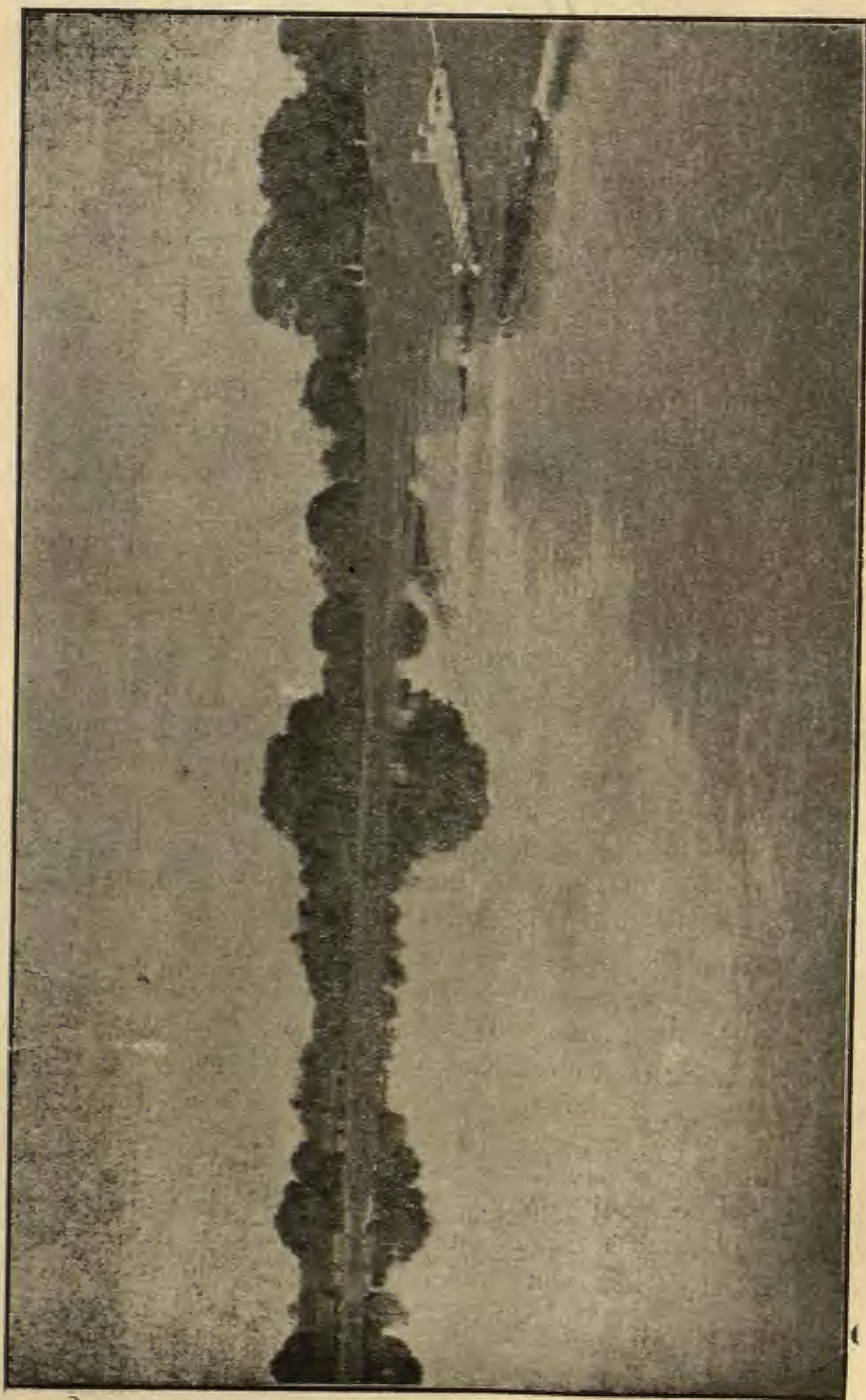


Temple of Tripura Sundari built by Dhanya Manikya at Udaypur where the image of Tripura Sundari is worshipped by thousands of Pilgrims.

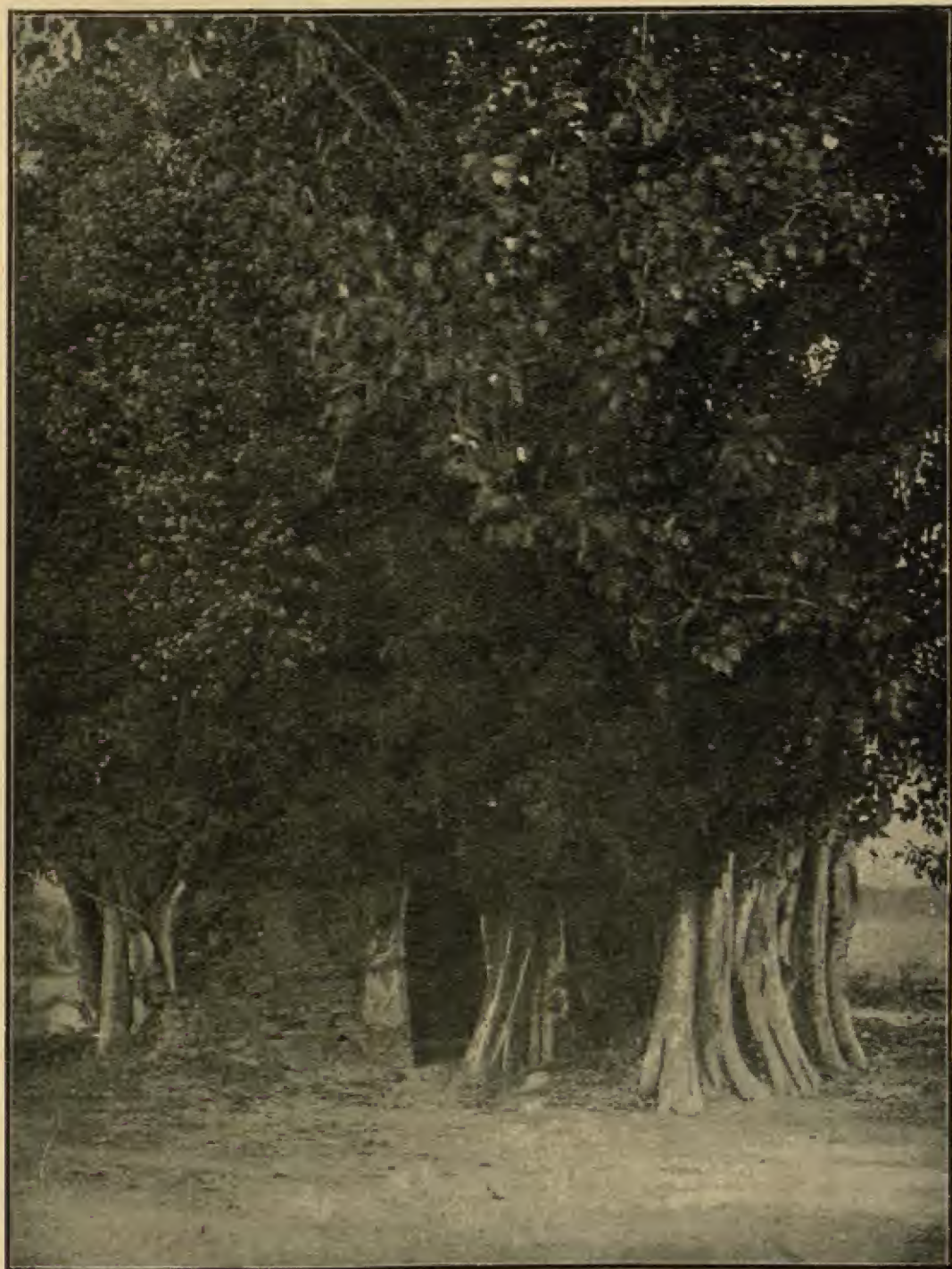
historical event. It was a long and terrible war. The king of Tripura drove out the army of the Nawab from Chittagong and took possession of his territory. At this Hossein Shah sent a vast army under his General Gour Mallik which met the Tripura forces first at Meherkul and then at Chandigarh near modern Sonamura. In the first battle the forces of Tripura were routed but in the second, they met with a decisive victory. Most of the Nawab's soldiers met with watery graves in the violent current of the Gumti. The tank, popularly called "Dhanyer Dighi," with the memorial tower on its bank still stands as a living witness to the great success achieved by King Dhanya. But the Nawab of Gour was not the man to bear the insult lying down. He sent another big army under Haiton Khan. Haiton attained some success and occupied a few forts of Tripura but his soldiers were ultimately routed and drowned in the river.

Dhanya Manikya signalised this victory over the Nawab by building in 1501 A. D. the famous temple of Tripura Sundari at Udaypur and immortalised himself by various works of public utility. The big tank of Kamalasagar which still exists as a standing monument of the constructive genius of King Dhanya was excavated at huge expense and named after his queen Kamala Devi. The tank even now supplies drinking water to a vast population of the locality. King Dhanya was not only a great warrior but also a true lover of Fine Arts. He patronised literature and music and got some valuable books and *panchali* (religious couplets) written by learned Pundits. He also brought expert musicians from Tirhoot for the improvement of musical culture.

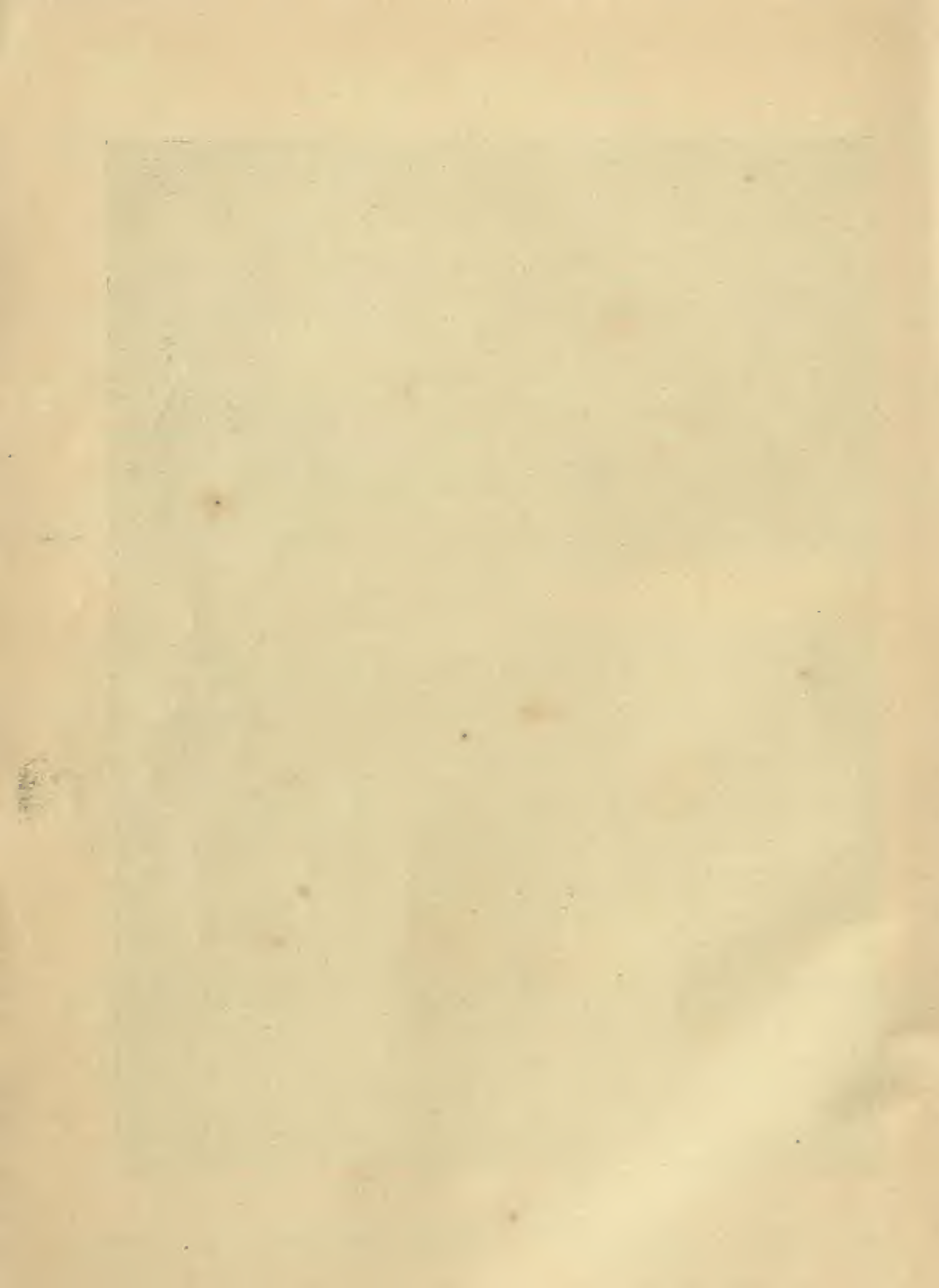
The death of Dhanya Manikya was followed by complications in the Raj family. His eldest son Dhawaja Manikya followed him to the throne but died soon after. His brother Deva Manikya, the next important king, ascended the throne in 1520 A. D. and conquered the parganah of Bhuluya and

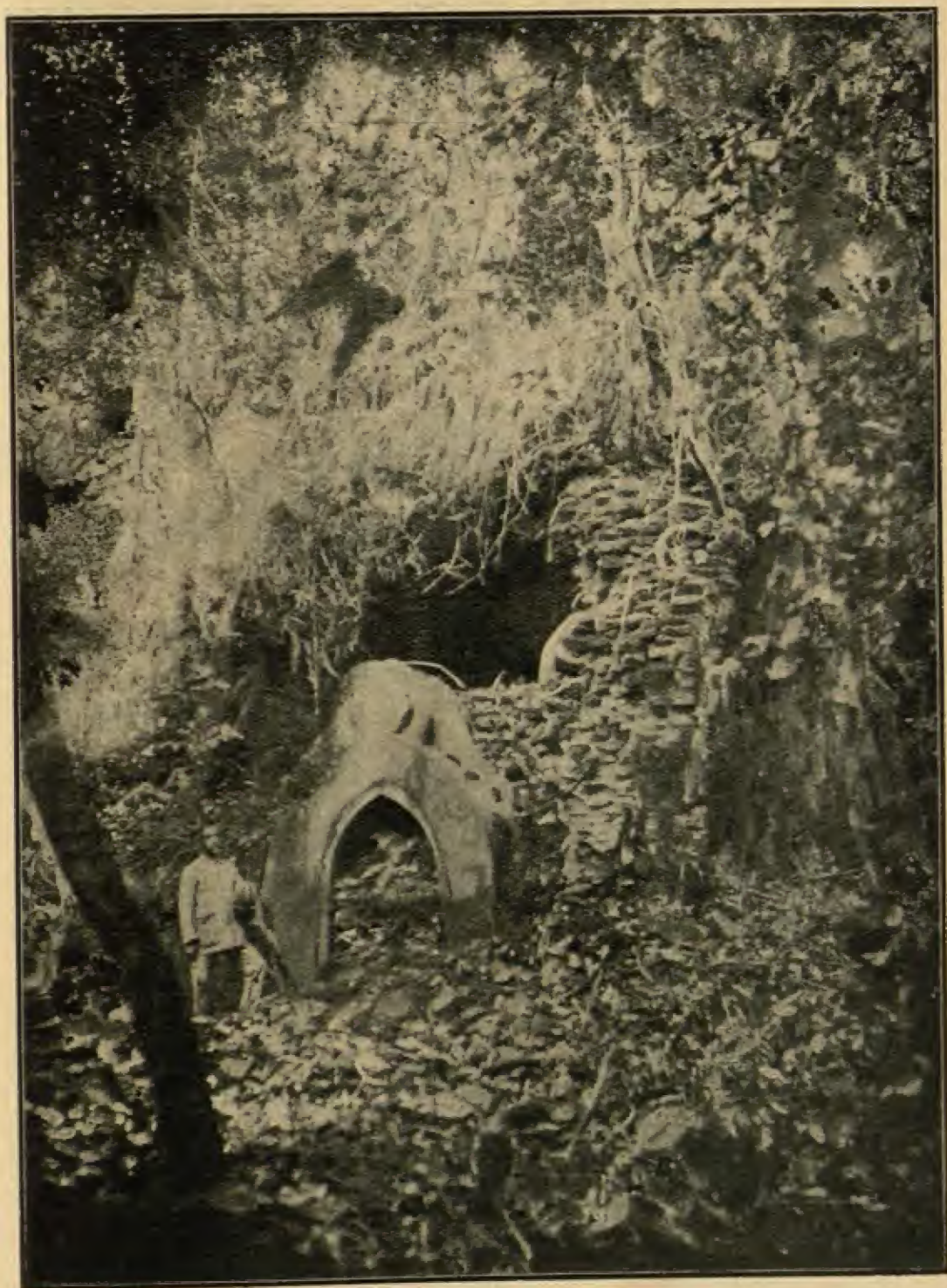


Kamalasagar, the renowned tank excavated by Dhanya Manikya at Kamalasagar Station on the Assam Bengal Railway.

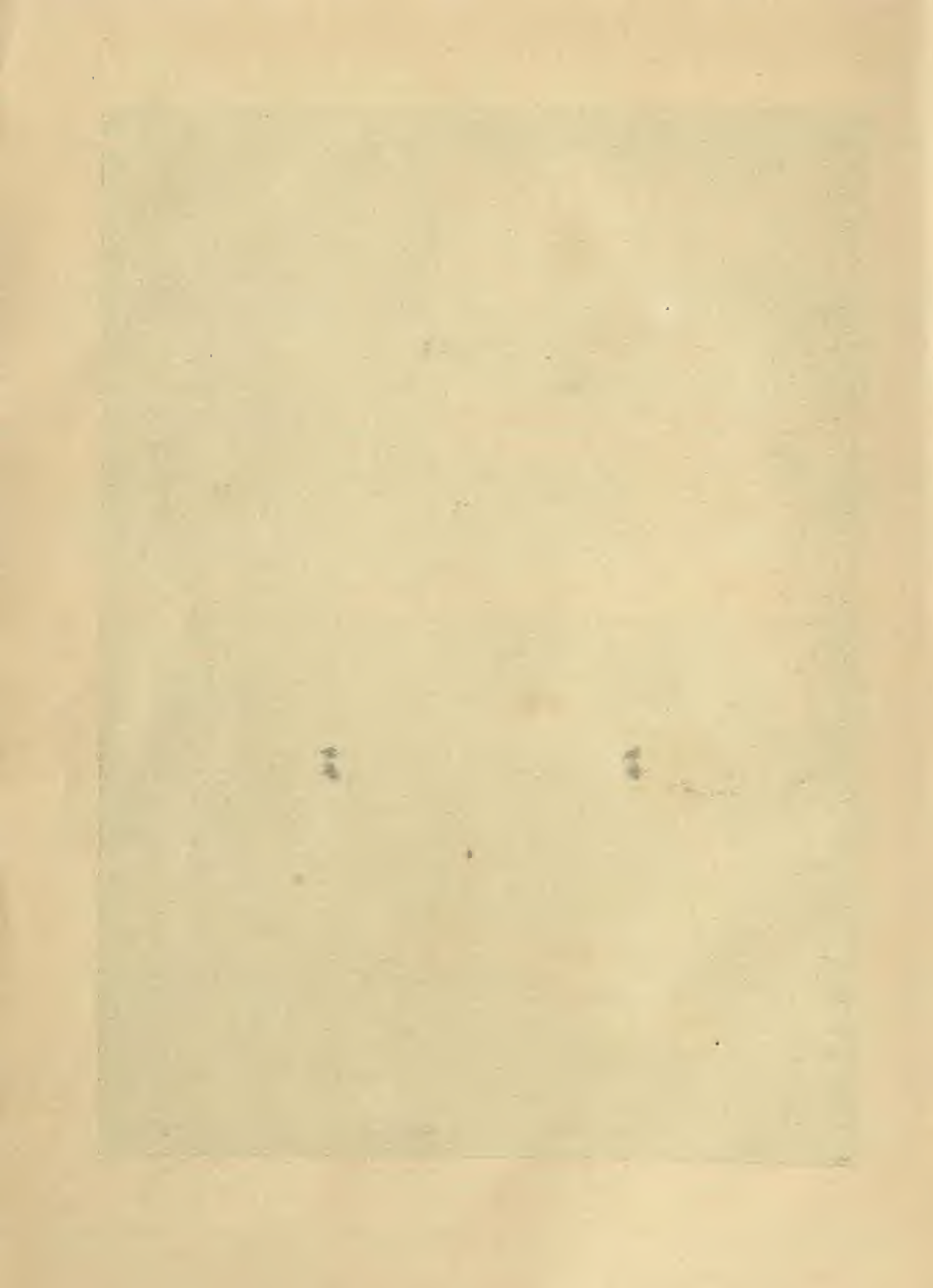


Temple of Siva built by Dhanya Manikya at Lohagarh.





Ruins of the palace of Uday Manikya at Chandrapur near Udaypur.



compelled its king to pay him revenue annually. But fresh quarrels broke out with the Nawab of Gour over the old question of the possession of Chittagong and Hossein Shah's son Nasarath Shah succeeded in ousting the soldiers of Tripura from Chittagong and in establishing his power there. But Deva Manikya's son Bijoy was more powerful than his father. He conquered Sylhet, Khasia and Joyantia hills and drove away the Mussalmans from Chittagong in a terrible battle in which his great General Kala Nazir was killed but the Pathan General Momarak Khan, brother-in-law of the king of Gour, was captured. The captive was sent to the king of Tripura and was sacrificed before the image of 'Fourteen Gods'. Bijoy Manikya was a contemporary of Emperor Akbar and ruled from 1528 to 1570 A. D. with much credit having accomplished many good deeds for the benefit of his people.

Misfortune overtook the Royal house after the death of Bijoya Manikya. One Gopi Prosad of very low origin and a former cook of Bijoy Manikya rose to be the commander-in-chief through the good graces of the King. This upstart secretly put an end to the life of Bijoy Manikya's son, the heir to the throne and declared himself King under the name of Uday Manikya. He reigned for about four years. During his time the King of Gour again invaded Chittagong and occupied some parts of the possessions of Tripura. After Uday Manikya's death his son Joy Manikya became king. He was a mere puppet in the hands of his General Ranagan Narain. Ranagan was, however, put to death by Amar, son of Deva Manikya. Amar, in his turn, killed Joy Manikya and ascended the throne. Thus, the old house of Tripura was once more restored to power.

The reign of Amar Manikya, who assumed government in 1597 A. D. is full of important historical events. A new palace, built on a site to the east of Udaypur and named Amarapur after his name, was the first of a series of his notable deeds. He defeated and brought under control the rebellious Zemindars of Taraf in Sylhet and compelled the insubordinate Raja of

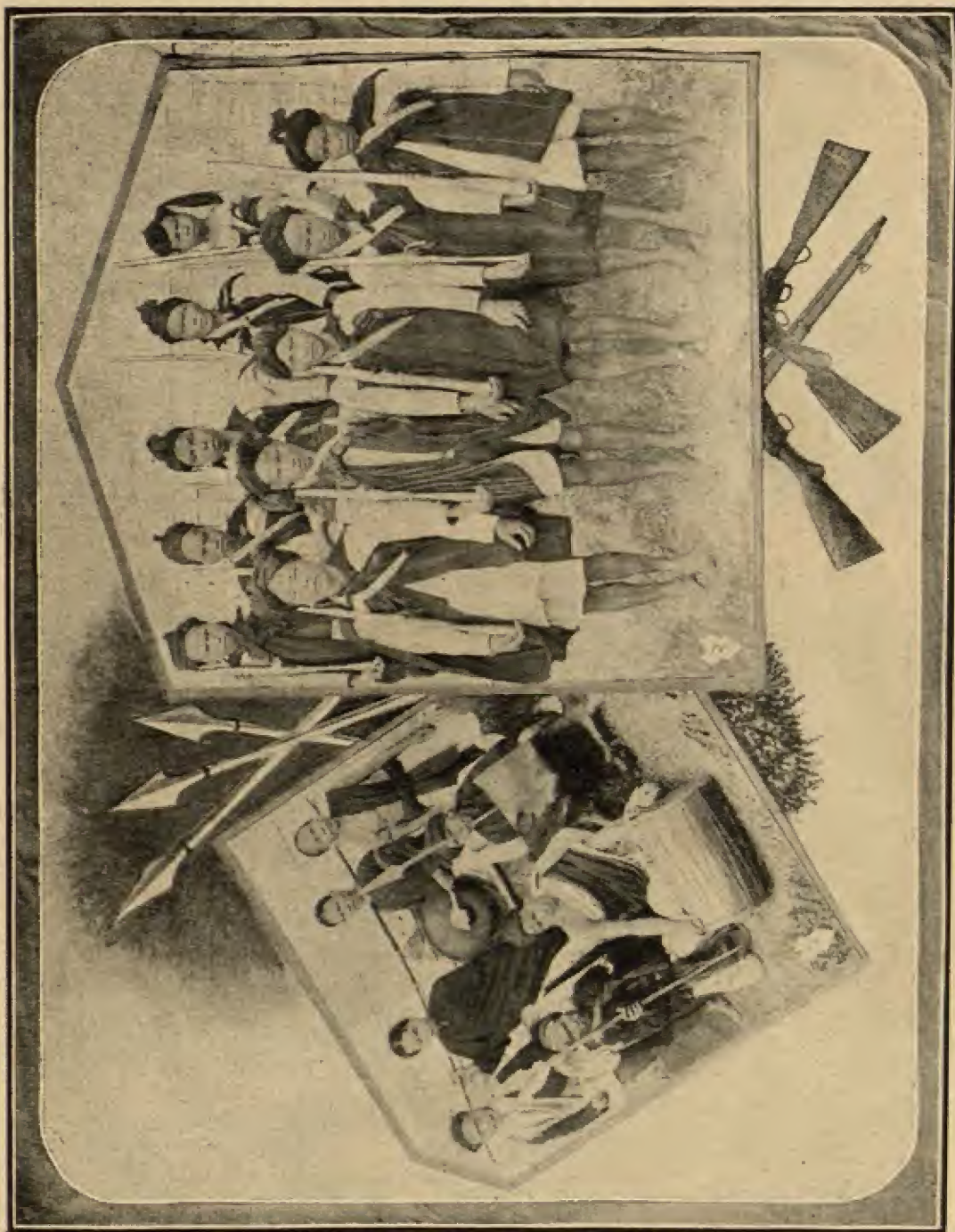
Bhuluya to pay him regular revenue and also conquered Bakla Chandradwip which was then growing into a flourishing place. Immediately after these events Islam Khan, Nawab of Dacca shifted his capital to Dacca and attacked the kingdom of Tripura but his army sustained a heavy defeat at the hands of Isha Khan, the commander of Amar.

Encouraged by these victories Amar Manikya led an expedition to Arakan and occupied a few places. In retaliation the ruler of Arakan sought the help of the Portuguese and with their aid not only snatched off Chittagong but attacked Udaypur, ransacked the capital and carried a large booty. Amar Manikya saved his life by a timely flight but he was too proud a king to endure such an ignominy and put an end to his life by poisoning. King Amar was not only brave and heroic but also generous to the extreme. He gave away innumerable Taluks as free gifts to Brahmins and dieties to which many more were added by his son Rajdhar.

Rajdhar ruled only for three years. He kept himself away from the battle field and devoted himself to religious pursuits. His indifference to the affairs of the state induced the Nowab of Bengal to attack Tripura but he had to beat a hasty retreat. Rajdhar was succeeded by his son Josodhar.

During the rule of Josodhar Manikya the peace of the country was disturbed by the infestations of the Mughls of Chittagong and the Nawab of Bengal who invaded and occupied the plains of Tripura. Josodhar was succeeded by his son Kalyan. He was a good ruler and was able to regain to some extent the lost glory of the country. He re-organised the Army and excavated the well-known tank called *Kalyansagar* and founded the Kali temple at Kashba. After his death a civil war broke out between his sons Govinda and Nakshatra for the crown but high-souled Govinda the eldest, unexpectedly brought all troubles to an end by withdrawing in favour of his younger brother.





Kukee Soldiers of Tripura.

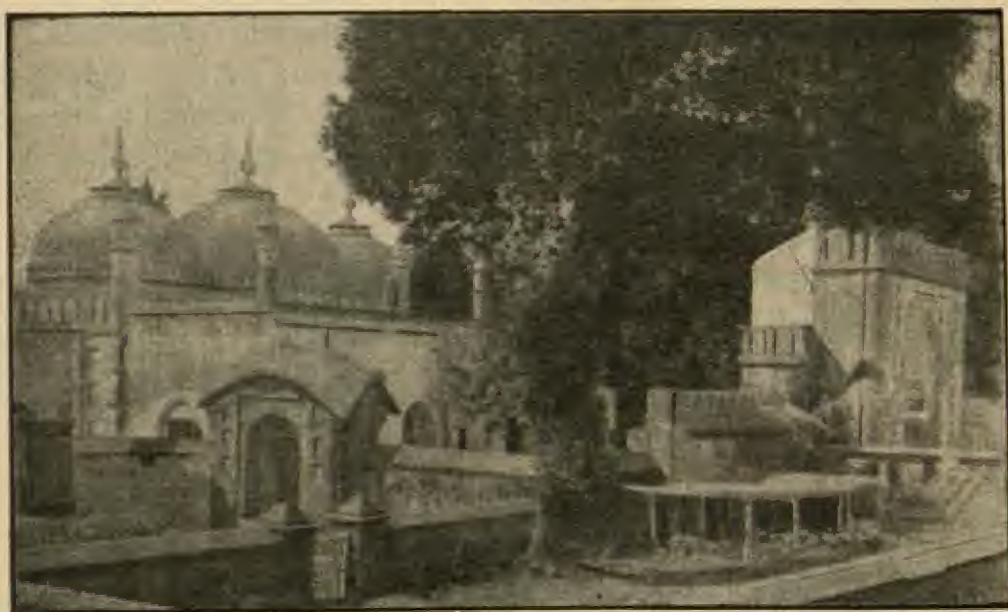


Nakshatra Ray ascended the throne under the name of Chhatra Manikya. During his reign Tavernier, the French traveller, came out to India. In his Travels (P. 156) it is stated that to the east of the Moghul Empire there were three independent states, viz., Assam, Tripura and Arakan. Nakshatra Ray was a contemporary of Shah Jehan, the famous Moghul Emperor. After accession to the throne of Delhi by Aurangzeb his second brother Suja with his Begum Peri Banu took shelter in Tripura and passed some time at the hermitage of Govinda Manikya on their way to Arakan. Emperor Aurangzeb wrote a friendly letter to Chhatra Manikya recognising his independence and requesting him to send his brother and sister-in-law as captives to him but Chhatra Manikya refused to bring a slur on the noble traditions of his family by acceding to such an unholy request of the Emperor.

Chhatra Manikya died after a short reign of seven years only and was succeeded by his elder brother Govinda Manikya. Govinda Manikya was an ideal king loved and respected by the high and the low alike. The Gumti embankment and the famous temple of Chandranath were built by him. Though these two works of immense public utility are enough to perpetuate his name in the history of Bengal, yet his chief fame lies in the construction of the noted Suja Mosque of Comilla which he built as a mark of friendship between himself and unfortunate Suja with whom he had an opportunity of passing some time in the forest while in exile. How great, good and tolerant he was is evidenced by the fact that he is the central figure of the novel "Rajarshi" (the Saint King) and the famous drama "Bisarjan" (Immersion) of Poet Rabindra Nath Tagore.

After Govinda Manikya the throne of Tripura was occupied in succession by Ramdeb Manikya, Narendra Manikya, and Ratna Manikya, the Second. King Ramdeb excavated a huge tank in village Maijkhari which exists still to-day as Ramsagar. King Ratnadeb is responsible for the creation of the post of *Bara-Thakur* or the principal prince which was the root of many a

trouble in the matter of succession. Ratna Manikya, the Second laid the foundation of the well known temple at Jagannathpur near Comilla called Satero Ratna or seventeen Jewels. This



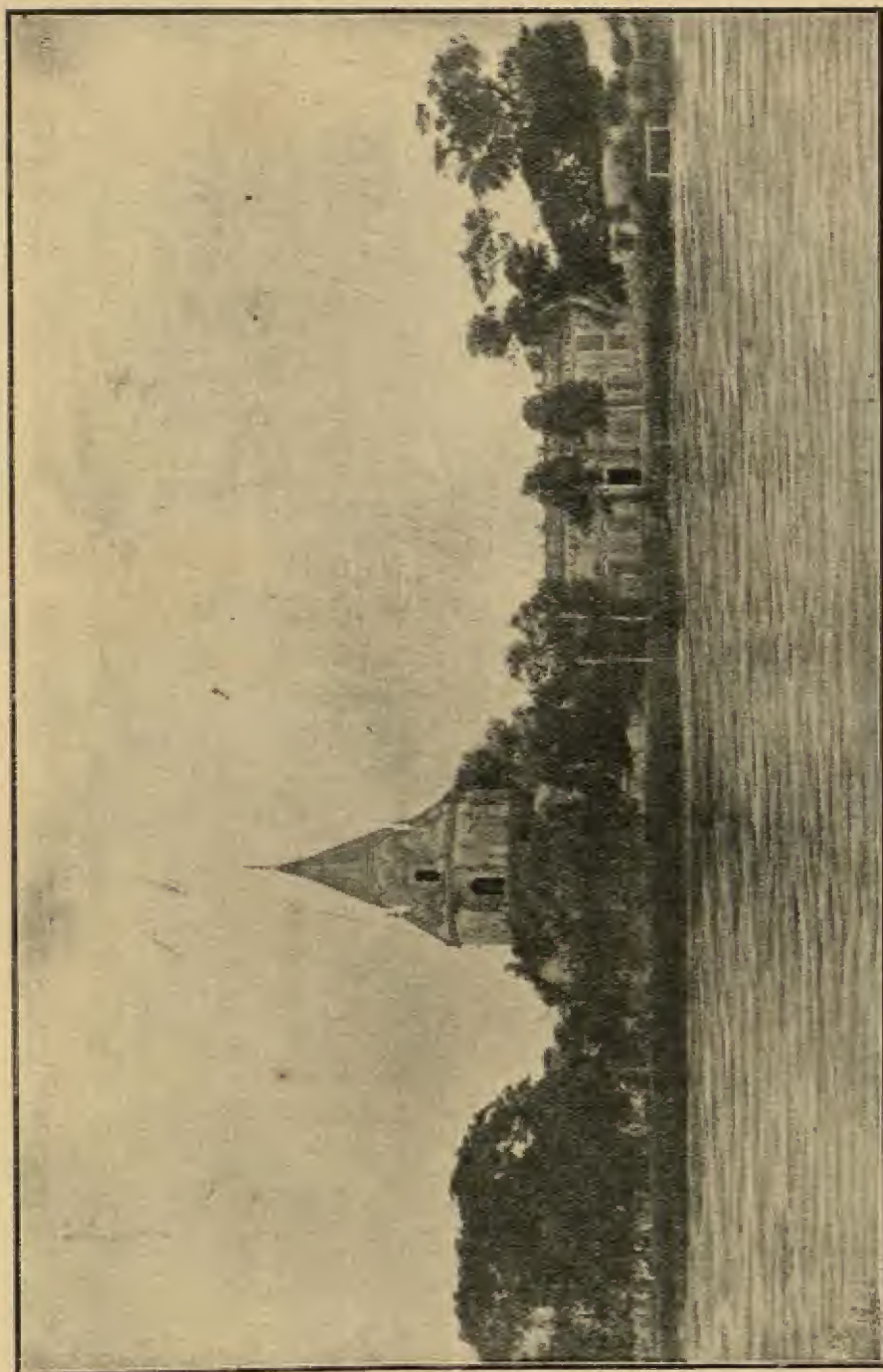
Shah Suja Mosque at Comilla built by Maharaja Govinda Manikya.

temple, which is now old and dilapidated is one of the sights worth seeing in Tripura. Ratna Manikya was put to death by his brother Ghanasyam in 1712 A. D, who became king after assuming the name of Mahendra Manikya. Mahendra Manikya died within two years and was succeeded by his younger brother Duryyudhana who ascended the throne as Dharma Manikya, the Second in 1714 A. D.

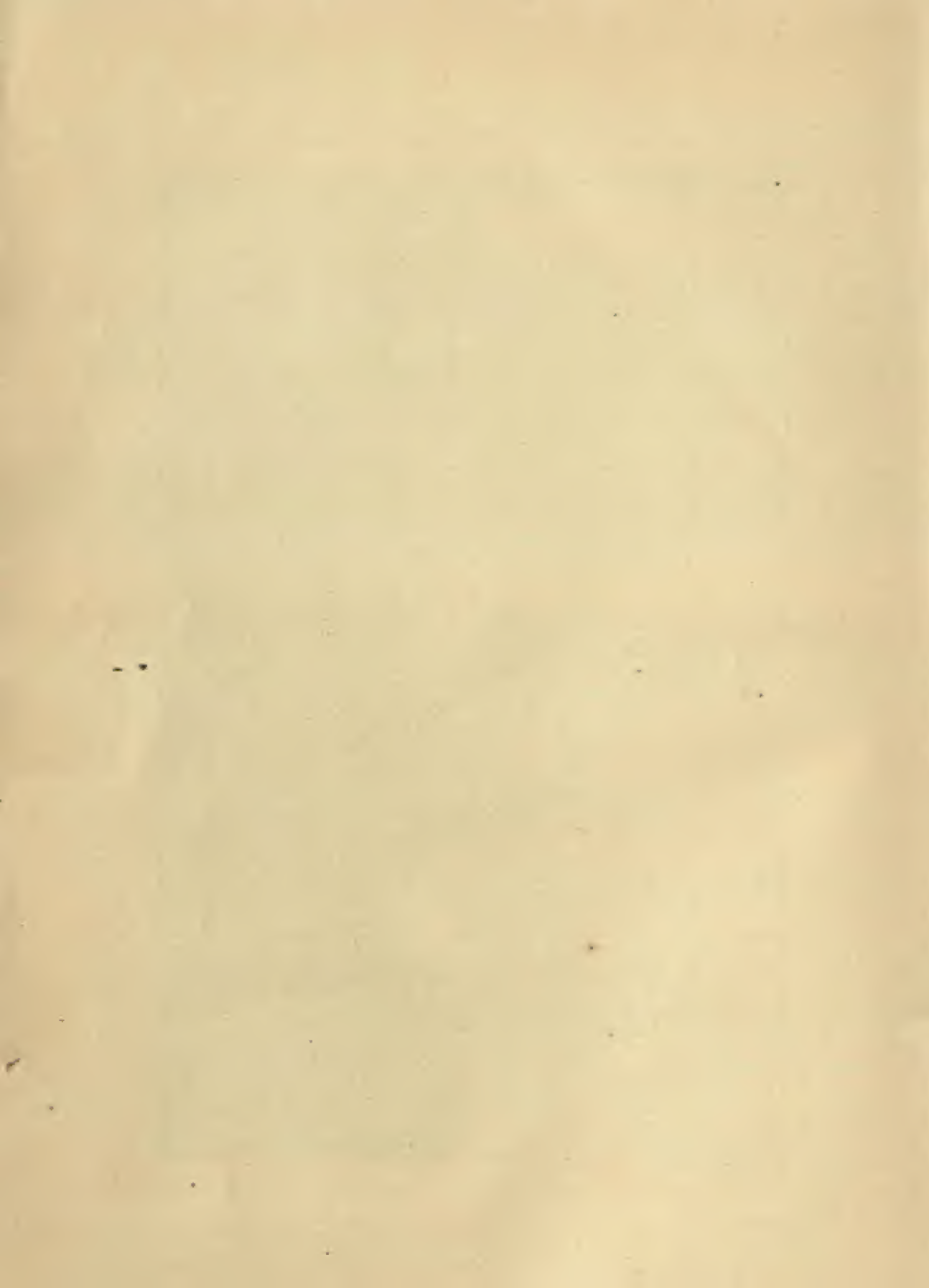
CHAPTER IV

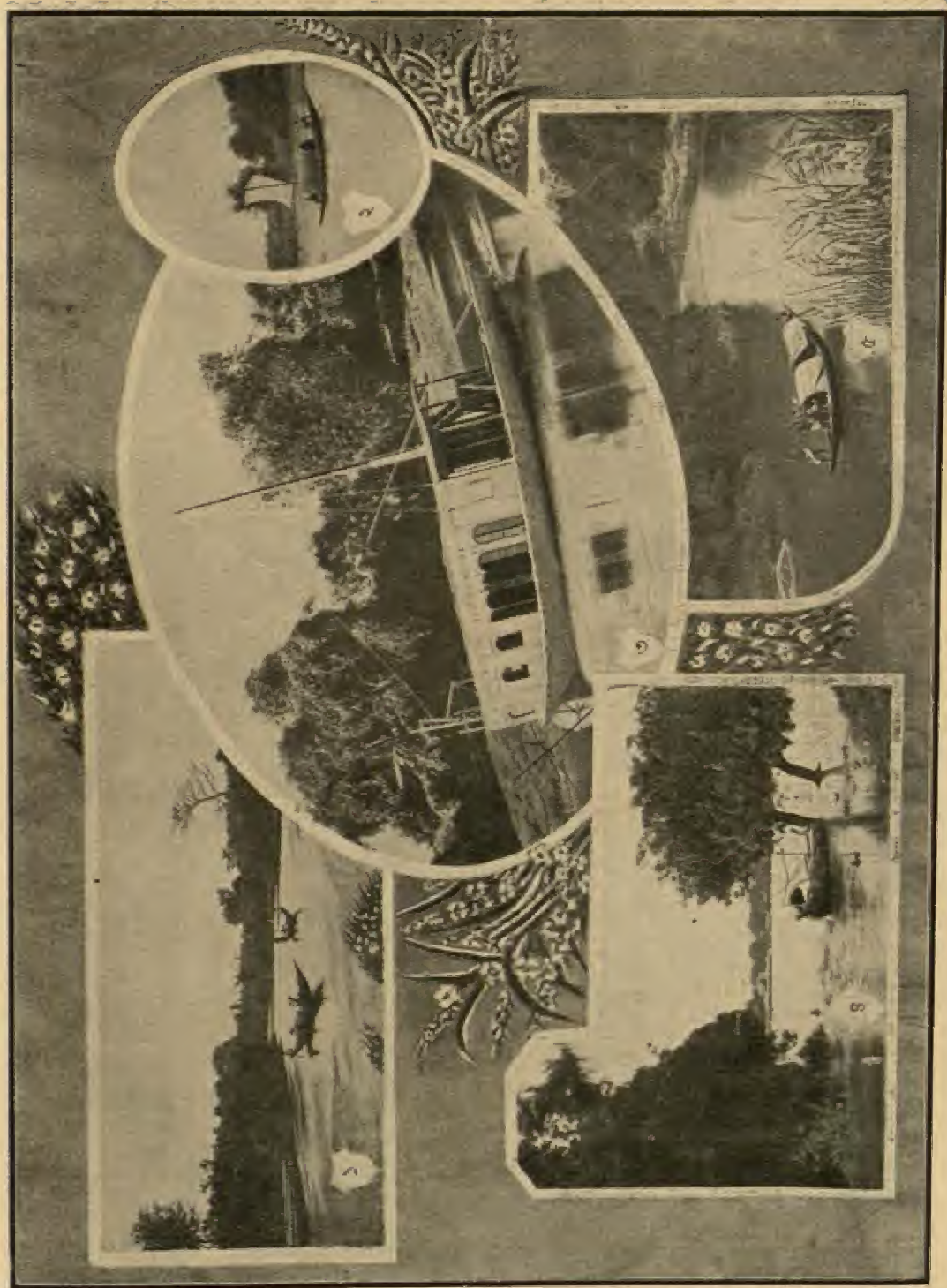
Mughul Inroads.

The kingdom of Tripura fell from its position of glory during the time of Dharma Manikya, the Second, when one Jagat Roy, a descendant of King Chhatra Manikya, rebelled



Satero Ratna (Seventeen Jewels) Temple of Jagannath at Jagannathpur near Comilla.





Models of the Navigable Vessels of Maharaja Bijoy Manikya.

against the throne and with the help of the Nayeb Nazim of Dacca attacked Tripura. The king in utter helplessness at this unexpected attack fled to the hills and Jagat Roy was declared king of the plains which was named Roshnabad or the "Land of Light" by the victorious Mahomedans. Dharma Manikya in despair appealed to Nawab Sujauddin of Mursidabad who granted him the Zemindari right of the Parganah of Roshnabad on a yearly rent of Rs. 5000/-. Since then the kings of Tripura have been in possession of Roshnabad as Zamindars.

European historians have referred to this development in the following words :—

"The Province of Tippera, which from time immemorial had been an independent Kingdom, became annexed to the Mugul Empire." (Stewart's History of Bengal P. 267.)

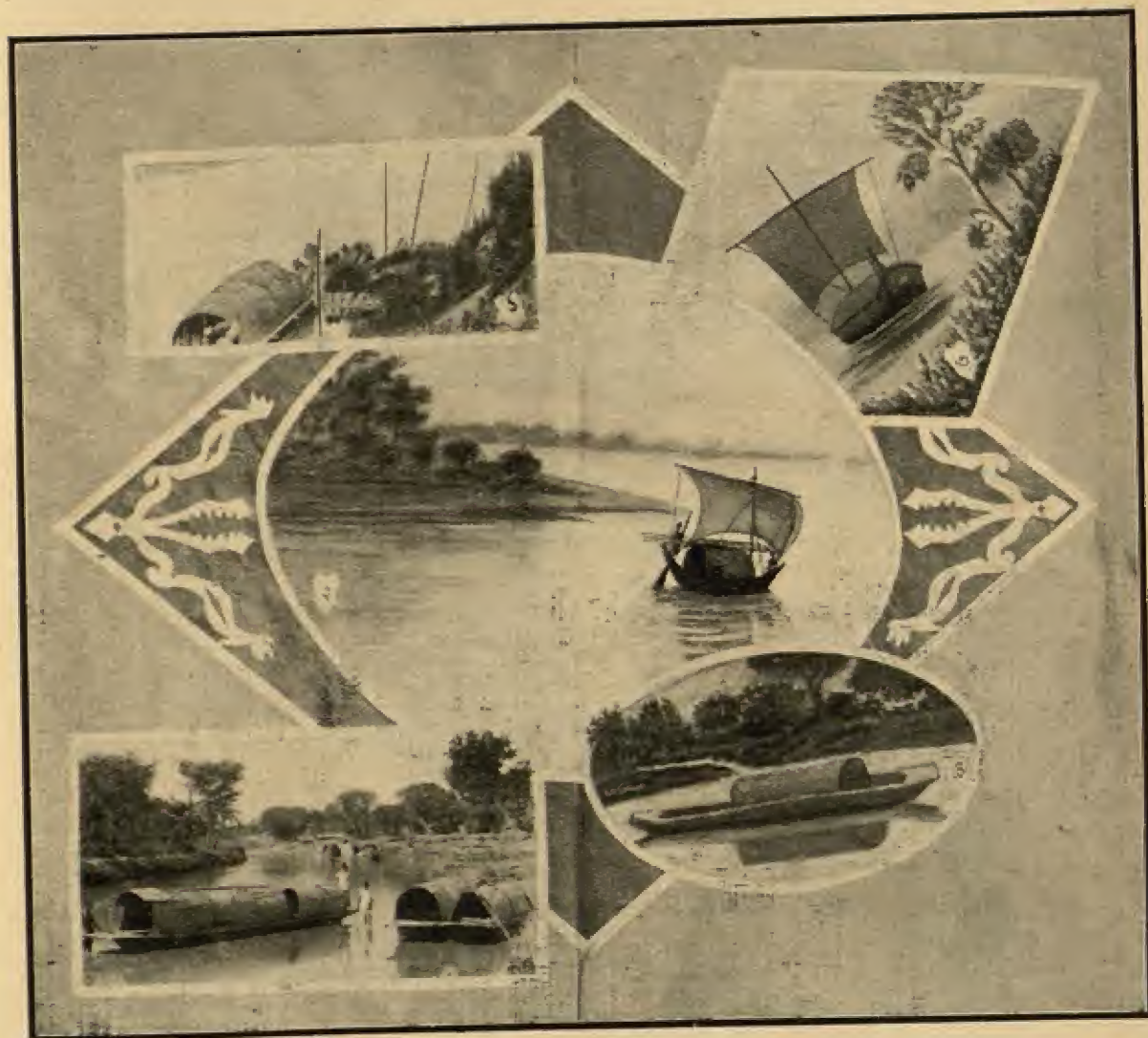
But our view of the matter is that this did not mean the loss of independent status so far as the Hill Territory of Tripura is concerned. It was only the portion to the west and south of the present district of British Tippera that was converted into the Zemindari of Roshnabad.

The king of Manipur availed himself of this crisis in Tripura, crossed the northern frontiers and occupied a portion. In order to perpetuate this great achievement the king of Manipur took the title of "Takhelnamba" or the Victor of Tripura and also got a book written named "Takhelongnomba" or the conquest of Tripura.

Dharma Manikya, though very much disturbed by these internal quarrels and also sad reverses at the hands of outsiders, found time to inaugurate many activities of a religious and philanthropic nature. Sanads of many rent-free lands granted by him which are still to be found bear testimony to his charity and piety. He was also a great patron of literature and art. It was through his encouragement and munificence that a Bengali translation in verse of the Mahabharata was completed.

Dharma Manikya, the Second, was succeeded by his brother Thakur Chandramani who assumed the name of Mukunda Manikya. He was a pious King and gave away to Brahmins, Baidyas and Kayesthas many rent-free-lands.

The history of Tripura from his time is the history of a tedious and interminable war with the Nawabs of Bengal who failing to establish permanent rights were always fomenting intrigues and interfering with succession. During the reign of Mukunda Manikya one powerful youth, Rudramani Thakur, a descendent of Chhatra Manikya organised a National Militia to oppose the Moslem inroads. But Mukunda Manikya did not approve of his activities as he was afraid of incurring the displeasure of the Moslems. The Moslems though apparently appreciated his action ultimately attacked the capital and captured Mukunda with his family. At this Mukunda Manikya committed suicide. On hearing this Moslem onslaught Rudramani who was organising an army in the jungles made a surprise attack on the capital and being unable to resist his attack the Moslems came to terms and left the Capital. As a reward for this act of bravery people wanted him to be king in preference to the sons of Mukunda Manikya. Rudramani therefore ascended the throne by assuming the name of Joy Manikya. Panch Cowrie, son of Mukunda Manikya was not satisfied with this arrangement and approached the Nawab of Murshidabad for help. With the aid of Nawab forces which was secured on promise of supply of elephants and other provisions, Panch Cowrie attacked the Capital of Tripura and after routing Joy Manikya occupied the throne as Indra Manikya. But Indra Manikya could not rule peacefully. Joy Manikya, the dethroned ruler, fled to the Motai hills and established a Government there. With the help of Zamindars he carried on repeated inroads on Udaypur and did not give Indra Manikya peace for a minute. Taking advantage of these internal dissensions Gangadhar, son of the late Dharma Manikya, secured a Fatwa from the Nawab of Murshidabad and claimed the throne. Failing in his attempt



Models of the Navigable Vessels of Maharaja Bijoy Manikya.



he fled to Dacca and ended his days there. After the death of Indra Manikya and Joy Manikya, Joy Manikya's brother Harimani Thakur ascended the throne under the name of Bejoy Manikya. These internal feuds naturally encouraged the Zamindars to defy the central authority and Samser Ghazi, Zaminder of Meherkul, declared himself as ruler of Roshnabad. After some time taking advantage of the quarrels between the King of Tripura and the Nawab of Bengal and the absence of King Bijoy Manikya from capital, Samser collected an army attacked and ransacked Udaypur, the capital of Tripura, and declared himself King. But the subjects having refused to recognise any but a lineal descendant of the Raj family as King, he set up one Labanga Thakur, a grandson of Dharma Manikya, on the throne as Lakshman Manikya and attempted to rule and collect revenue.

In the midst of these feuds Prince Krishnamoni, son of Bijoy Manikya, left Udaypur and settled in Agartala which subsequently became the capital of Tripura.

Krishnamani did not remain idle. Before the usurper had time to consolidate his power he marched upon the capital and occupied it. Samser Ghazi was captured and sent as a tyrant to the Nawab at Murshidabad where he was shot dead. Krishnamoni occupied the throne as Krishna Manikya in 1761 A. D.

This was the time when the political horizon of Bengal was thickly overcast. There were troubles all around. The death of Alivardi Khan, succession of his grandson Sirajudowla and his fall through the mean treachery of some of his courtiers and the final shifting of the administrative power of the province from the hands of the Nawabs to a handful of English merchants followed one after another.

The first few years of the rule of Krishna Manikya saw him involved in quarrels not only with their old foe, the Nawab of Bengal, but also with the English who were daily growing into a power both politically and commercially. Chakla Roshna-

bad was the bone of contention this time. The Fauzdar of the Nawab, diffident as he was of success in a fresh trial of strength with Tripura, sought the help of the English and Governor Vansitart was not slow to avail himself of this golden opportunity of extending their power towards Chittagong. In February 1761 A. D. Mathew, the officer commanding in Chittagong marched against the King of Tripura who was fully prepared to meet them in the fort of Kailargarh near the present Kamalagar Station on the A. B. Railway. But by the machination of a traitor Bakshi, the soldiers of Tripura grew panic-stricken and the result was that before the armies came face to face most of them fled away. Thus, without any fight, the English flag was hoisted over the plains of Tripura within four years of their acceptance of the Dewani of Bengal.

Krishna Manikya was a pious and broadminded ruler. He completed the construction of the temple of Satero Ratna or "Seventeen Jewels" at Jagannathpur to the east of Comilla, the foundation of which was laid by Ratna Manikya the Second.

After the death of Krishna Manikya in 1783 fresh quarrels broke out over succession. There were two aspirants to the throne—Rajdhar, the son of Harimoni Thakur, younger brother of Krishna Manikya and Lakshman who was once before set up as a titular king by Samser Ghazi. But to avoid a civil war Queen Jahnavi Devi began to rule the country. She ruled only for three years but during this short period she gave ample proof of her ability as a sound administrator. She excavated the famous Ranir Dighi of Comilla and after the construction of the well-known Radhamadhav temple at Radhanagar near the present Akhaura Junction on the A. B. Ry, passed her life in devotion to the deity Radhamadhav. The Sanskrit inscription on the stone affixed in the temple which was specially composed by her for the dedication ceremony shows her efficiency in Sanskrit language and ability in writing Sanskrit Poems.

In 1786 the charge of administration was made over to Rajdhar while Lakshman's son Durgamoni was installed as



Temple of Jagannath built by Daitya Narayan, the Commander of Bijay Manikya's Army.



"Jubaraj" according to the desire of Queen Jahnavi Devi. This diplomatic move could but bring about temporary reconciliation between the opposite wings.



Temple of Radhamadhav at Radhanagar near Akhaura Junction on A. B. Ry.

Rajdhar married the daughter of the King of Manipur and thus established friendly relations with Manipore. During his rule Roshnabad was made a separate district as "Roshnabad Tippera" and a collector was appointed by the British Government. But the Zemindery right of the same remained with the rulers of Tripura.

The death of Rajdhar brought both his son Ram Ganga and Lakshman Manikya's son Durgamani on the arena and the ministers and councillors were divided between the two camps. This encouraged several other members of the royal family to try their luck for the throne. And after much trouble Ram Ganga ascended the throne. But Durgamani took the help of Kukee sardars and attacked the capital. He however did not meet with any success. At this time the British Governor-General persuaded him to give up the fight and appeal to the British for decision. This being acceded to, the British Government helped him in ascending the throne.

Ram Ganga accompanied by his brother Kashi Chandra left the capital and began to live in Sylhet. Maharaja Durga Manikya erected a temple at Benares and installed the image of Siva therein. Durga Manikya ruled for three years and then went out on a pilgrimage to Benares but died on his way on the 6th of April, 1818 near Patna.

After Durga Manikya's death Ram Ganga again seized the throne and installed his younger brother Kashi Chandra as Yuvaraj.

The reign of Maharaj Ram Ganga Manikya is a sad tale of internal feuds for occupation of the throne by a number of claimants. There were disturbances, fights and insurrections all over the country. Peace was a thing unknown to the king but nothing daunted, he fought and fought bravely against enormous odds and succeeded in maintaining his position.

The first Burmah war between the English and the Burmese broke out during his time, and he rendered all possible



Maharaja Durga Manikya.

Reproduced from an oil painting preserved in the Palace.



Maharaja Ram Ganga Manikya.

Reproduced from an oil painting preserved in the Palace.

help to the English who sought his friendship. During his later years he passed his days in religious meditation and in pilgrimage leaving the affairs of the state in the hands of his brother Kashi Chandra. Unlike his predecessors Ram Ganga Manikya did not marry for the second time even after the death of his only wife Maharani Chandratara. He possessed a spotless character and acquired special proficiency in the Persian language and also in Mensuration. He was skilled in archery and wrestling.

Maharaja Ram Ganga built a sanctuary at Brindaban and installed therein the image of Deity Rashbehari. He also set apart the Parganah of Bamutia as a Debuttar property to meet the expenses of the deity.

As a proof of his intense devotion to his Preceptor (Guru) he built two images and named them after his Preceptor and his wife. He died on November 14, 1826 A. D., during a Lunar eclipse placing his head on the feet of his Guru. He was succeeded by his brother Kashi Chandra who died after a short rule of three years only.

CHAPTER V.

Modern Period.



Maharaja Krishna Kishore Manikya.
Reproduced from an oil painting preserved in the Palace.

In the year 1830 A. D. Krishna Kishore the only son of Ram Ganga Manikya ascended the throne. On the report of the then Commissioner of Chittagong there was a proposal in 1836 to annex the territory of the Tripura state. To this proposal the Maharaja raised a vehement protest and Lord Auckland the then Governor-General recognised the independence of Tripura in his letter to the Commissioner of Chittagong, dated the 27th of December, 1838.

Maharaja Krishna Kishore was a skilful athlete and took keen interest in hunting, wrestling and fencing. He was an expert Persian scholar. He established his new Capital which was given the name of "Nutan Habeli" (New Residence) at a distance of five miles from Agartala. This name was subsequently changed into "New Agartala." This in its turn came later on to be called "Agartala" which continues to be the capital of the State, while the old capital came to be known as "Old Agartala". He was killed by a lightning shock in 1850 A. D. and was succeeded by his son Ishan Chandra Manikya.

On assumption of the throne Ishan Chandra found himself beset with various difficulties. Not only the treasury was empty but there were heavy debts to be cleared. Furthermore, several unsuccessful attempts were made at his life. His efforts to liquidate the debts were thwarted by some plotting members of the court. But the spiritual guide (Guru) of the Maharaja, Goswami Bipin Behari came to his rescue at this crisis and took over charge of management of the State as well as of the Zemindari of Chakla Roshnabad. In the course of a few years he evolved order out of chaos.



Maharaja Ishan Chandra Manikya.

Reproduced from an oil painting preserved in the Palace.

When the Sepoy Mutiny broke out in the year 1857, Maharaja Ishan Chandra Manikya instead of participating in anti-British activities helped them in all possible ways. The sepoys of Chittagong were not given the help they sought. They were forbidden to enter his territory, while a detachment was despatched in aid of the British.

At this time the Zaminders in the British district of Tippera began to forfeit the rent-free lands of such tenure holders who had more than 100 Bighas of land but whose titles were either defective or could not be traced. The Zaminder of Sarail became particularly successful in such attempts. This encouraged Maharaja Ishan Chandra Manikya's Preceptor minister to adopt similar measures and increase the income of the State and the Zemindary. Although Maharaja Ishan Chandra was profoundly devoted to his Guru and would do anything at his bidding he refused to consent to this proposal and some

pious difference of opinion from the Maharaja's side presented an insurmountable difficulty. The Maharaja contended that the lands which had once been given away by his forefathers as free gifts could not be confiscated with a safe conscience; but his Guru differed in this view, and insisted the Maharaja on putting his signature to the documents nullifying the deed of gift. After a good deal of discussion the Maharaja yielded and put his seal with the following significant words:—"The bidding of the Guru." But strange it is that immediately thereafter his right hand was paralysed and in spite of all possible medical help the Maharaja did not recover from the attack and after a few months he died at the young age of 33 only.



Maharaja Bir Chandra Manikya.
Reproduced from an oil painting preserved in the Palace.

Maharaja Ishanchandra's death plunged Tripura afresh in quarrels of succession. Though his younger brother Bir Chandra succeeded him just after his death in August 1862, two other claimants viz. Chakradwaja and Nilkrishna, who were also sons of Maharaja Krishna Kishore Manikya, sought the help of the British Court for decision. After various difficulties Bir Chandra was actually installed on the 9th of March 1870.

Lord Mayo was the Governor-General of India at this time. He appointed a Political Agent in Tripura for the first time in 1871 for the suppression of the Kukees in the Lushai Hills.

The rule of Bir Chandra Manikya marks one important era in the history of Tripura. From him the modern period in Tripura may be said to have actually begun. He was not



Installation ceremony of Maharaja Bir Chandra Manikya.

Reproduced from an oil painting preserved in the Palace.

only an able administrator but a great patron of literature, arts and music. He introduced many important reforms in the Civil and Executive administration of the country by remodelling the same on up-to-date European methods. Before he came to the throne all judicial matters used to come before the Maharaja for final disposal. But this was abolished by him and the task was entrusted to two judges appointed by the Maharaja. The departments of Excise, Stamps and Registration were opened and laws relating to these departments were formulated at his instance. The whole territory was subdivided for convenience of administration and in short a renaissance marked every phase of life of the state. He not only created several new posts but also gathered round him a number of very able administrators of the day. He appointed Ishan Chandra Gupta of Chunta

as Dewan of Chakla. Ishan Chandra was a distinguished lawyer of the Comilla Bar and compiled the criminal and judicial laws which with modifications here and there still regulate the criminal and judicial administration of the State. Ram Manikya Barman of Bidyakot was another shrewd and able officer who helped very much in the suppression of the Kukee troubles and also in the reorganisation of the internal affairs. In 1878, Prince Radha Kishore was appointed the chief judge of the Khas Appellate court in which capacity he rendered meritorious services. Bir Chandra Manikya also appointed Braja Mohan Thakur, Dinabandhu Thakur, Nilmoni Das, Rai Bahadur Mohini Mohan Bardhan, Dhananjaya Thakur, Rai Bahadur Umakanta Das, as ministers one after another, each of whom rendered valuable services to the State. Rai Bahadur Mohini Mohan Bardhan compiled the Tenancy Act, formulated rules regarding the leave of officers and for the protection of the properties of minors. Mr. Sambhu Chandra Mukherjee, the renowned publicist, was also appointed as assistant minister for political works.

In 1875 Maharaja Bir Chandra met Lord Northbrook the then Governor-General at Dacca and discussed many important political matters with him. The Maharaja was given a cordial reception by the Governor-General who also appreciated the very attractive personality of the Maharaja.

In 1879, Maharaja Bir Chandra introduced a measure of far reaching importance and abolished slavery from the Tripura territory. Another landmark in the history of the state was the abolition of the Suttee in 1888.

In 1883 the Maharaja was stricken with a great bereavement in the death of Maharani Bhanumati to whom he was very much attached. He appointed an Administrative Council consisting of five distinguished officers and members of the Raj family with Prince Radha Kishore as President and left for Brindaban to perform the last rites of the deceased.

After his return from Brindaban the Maharaja formed an Advisory Council with seven members to help the then minister Dhananjay Thakur.

About this time young Poet Rabindra Nath returned to India after his first European tour and wrote his well-known lyric "Bhagna Hriday" (Broken Heart). Smitten with sorrow as the Maharaja was at the time, this book created a great and deep impression in his mind and the Maharaja sent one of his ministers to Rabindra Nath conveying congratulations and desiring his acquaintance.

Reference to this incident is found in the "Jiban Smriti" (Reminiscences) of Rabindranath, who wrote :—"I remember after this book came out, Maharaja Bir Chandra Manikya's Minister called on me to convey this fact only that the poem has deeply impressed the Maharaja who entertained high hopes of the future of the Poet." This brought about a friendship between the Raj Family and the Tagores which exists even now.

Since then whenever the Maharaja came down to Calcutta he used to send for Rabindranath and took great delight in listening to Rabindranath's recitation and music. The Poet felt very shy but the Maharaja's eagerness and genial temperament served to banish all shyness. When ailing Bir Chandra went to Kurseong for a change, he took Rabindranath along with him. There the Maharaja used to discuss poetry and music with Rabindranath far into the night. The presence of the Vaishnava poet Radha Raman Ghosh, Private Secretary of the Maharaja, enhanced the charm of the literary discussions.

The following description of the attainments of the Maharaja from the Rajamala (P. 245) written by the late Kailash Chandra Singh, who was opposed to the accession of the Maharaja to the throne will be read with interest :—

"The Maharaja possesses a handsome physique with bright and beautiful features. He is very well-versed in the Bengali language and is a poet of high order. We have seen two

books of lyrical poems written by the Maharaja. His song poems are composed in Brajabuli (Mixed Hindi) and written in imitation of the poems of Vaishnava poets Vidyapati and Gobinda Das. Though imitations the poems breathe a spirit of simplicity and sweetness that never fails to touch the heart and create a deep impression. It is a matter of great regret that these books have never gone beyond the boundaries of the state, as the Maharaja is very unwilling to publish them. Had they been published, there is no doubt that he would have secured a high place among the poets of Bengal. The Maharaja is well versed in Urdu and Manipuri and can talk in those languages as fluently as the mother tongue. The Maharaja also possesses some knowledge of Sanskrit and English. He is an expert artist and a good photographer. He possesses extraordinary abilities as a musician. He is very temperate in habit and never touches liquor. He is extremely intelligent, shrewd and an attractive conversationalist. He is so fascinating in conversation that a talk with him for a few minutes would disarm even his worst enemies."

A distinguished musician himself, he devoted considerable time to the cultivation and culture of music and gathered round him all expert musicians of the day. The songs composed by him were of very high order and are still very popular in the country.

"Birchandra Manikya earned from the grateful people of Bengal the covetable but appropriate title of Vikramaditya of present age" (*The rulers of Tripura—Dr. S. N. Sen.) As such the Maharaja gathered from all over India many distinguished artists, musicians and pandits well-versed in Indian philosophy and religion. Though his endeavour to re-edit the original Rajmala did not meet with much success, Raj Ratnakar another historical work was published from the original manuscript in 1895. Through his munificence and patronage Pandit Ramnarayan Vidyaratna of Murshidabad edited the "Sreemat Bhagbatam" with sufficient notes and Bengali translations.

*Chunta Prakash extra ordinary issue, 16th January, 1929.

“Dr. Dinesh Chandra Sen, the author of the well-known Bengali literature ‘Bangabhasha-O-Sahitya’ has achieved to-day a world wide reputation but in the early days of his literary efforts the publication of his monumental work was rendered possible by the munificence of the enlightened ruler (Bir Chandra Manikya) of Tripura.” (* The Rulers of Tripura - Dr. S. N. Sen.)

In the eighties of the last century, the Maharaja followed the rapid developments in photography with keen interest and was always found making photographic experiments in his studio especially equipped for scientific experiments. For the encouragement of the princes, nobles and the people of the state, he used to hold an annual Photo Exhibition at Agartala. His activities in connection with photo art attracted so much public attention that “Practical Photographer” the photographic journal of America, published an illustrated biography of the Maharaja in one of its issues. Though in his early life the Maharaja spent much of his time in hunting, wrestling and all other games, in his later age he devoted his time and energy to photographic and other scientific experiments and also to painting. He appointed a French artist for painting the portraits of some of the deceased Maharajas.

Besides various other institutions of public utility within his territory, the Birchandra Public Library at Comilla owes its foundation to the Maharaja’s munificence. The library is a living monument of the great Maharaja in the heart of the British district of Tippera. After protracted illness Maharaja Birchandra died in 1896 in Calcutta. He was cremated at the Keoratala ghat by the side of the crematory of the late Maharaja of Mysore.

Radha Kishore Manikya.

Bir Chandra Manikya was succeeded by his eldest son Radha Kishore Manikya in 1897. He was 40 when he came to

* “Chunta Prakash” Extra-ordinary issue, 16th January 1990.

the *Gadi* and had therefore gained considerable experience of men and things which stood him in good stead in the admini-



Maharaja Radhakishore Manikya.

Reproduced from an oil painting preserved in the Palace.

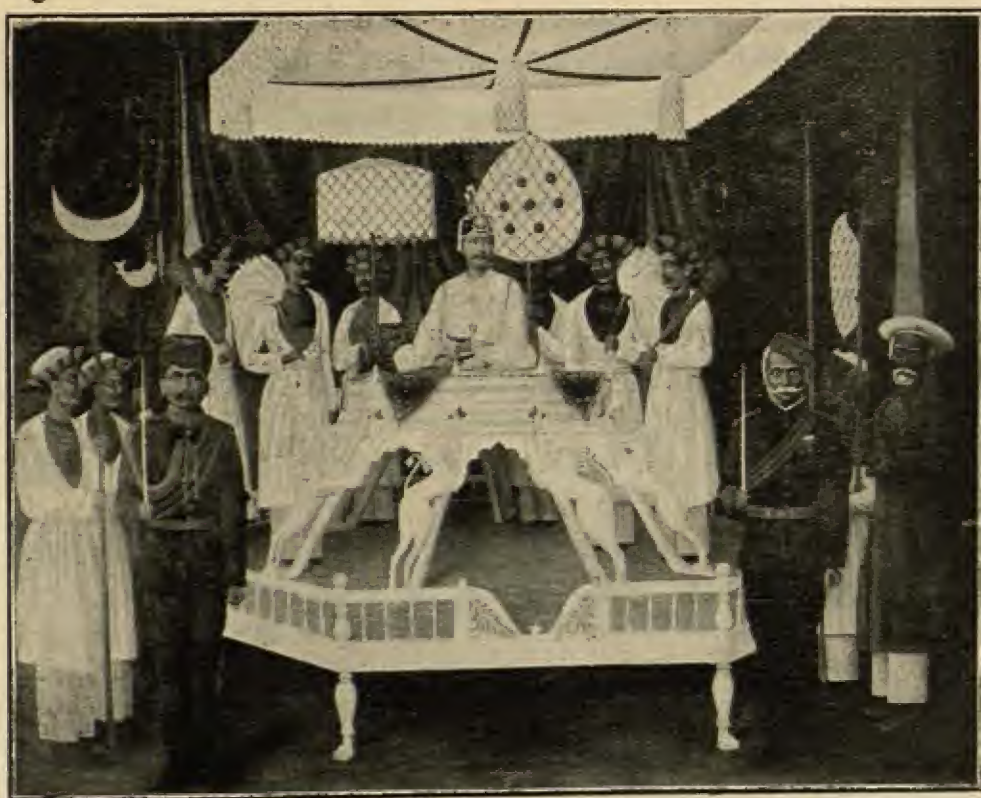
stration of the state. He was an intelligent, enthusiastic and patriotic ruler. As Jubaraj he had already won the admiration of all by his keen sense of justice and equity and solicitude for the welfare of his subjects. He ruled for only 12 years but those were crowded years of marvellous achievements. During this short period he introduced reforms which led to all round development in every phase of life of the state. His was an eventful reign "marked by improvement in all departments of the state and private concerns

of the Raj family. There was a continuous development of revenue and the administration was reorganised and placed on a sound basis. Stately buildings, both public and private, adorned the Capital where it was a mere cluster of huts a few years ago. His liberality reached beyond the confines of his State and extended in public and private charities and institutions in the metropolis and other places."

The Maharaja was an erudite scholar and evinced great interest in the education of the people as well as of the princes and nobles of the State. During his time there were not only great developments in the educational activities of the State but the liberality of the Maharaja found expression in the help he rendered to some of the educational institutions of Bengal particularly to Poet Rabindra Nath Tagore's International

university at Bolpur, the Bengal Technical Institute and Comilla Victoria College.

Soon after his accession the northern divisions of the State were faced with a severe distress owing to the failure of crops due to insufficient rain. Radha Kishore Manikya immediately organised relief work to help his distressed subjects. Another serious blow was the great earthquake of June 12, 1897. Though the State was less affected in comparison with Cooch-Bihar, Rungpur, Bogra, Mymensingh and Dacca yet the damage was considerable. The palace of the Maharaja was so badly damaged that a fresh palace had to be constructed. The work of construction was entrusted to the well-known firm of engineers Messrs Martin & Co., and the beauty and grandeur of the new



Installation Ceremony of Maharaja Radha Kishore Manikya.
Reproduced from an oil painting preserved in the Palace.

palace which is called Ujyayanta Raj Palace never fail to attract even a casual visitor to Tripura.

Sir John Woodburn who became the Lieutenant Governor of Bengal in 1898, soon after assumption of office, paid a visit to Comilla where he discussed many important matters with the Maharaja, and several complicated questions regarding the settlement operations of the Maharaja's Zemindary in British Tippera, which were then in operation, were also disposed of.

In 1900 Radha Kishore Manikya arranged the marriage of the Jubaraja Birendra Kishore with the grand daughter of Sir Jung Bahadur of Nepal which was an occasion of great festivities and rejoicings. This matrimonial alliance with a Kshatriya ruling house of Northern India was considered by the people as a great social reform. As a matter of fact since then many other such alliances have been established.

The Maharaja was a great lover of Bengali language and was much attached to Bengali literature. He, therefore, hungered for society of literary men. This desire brought him into contact with Dr. Rabindra Nath Tagore who enjoyed the friendship of his father, Sir Jagadish Chandra Bose and other best minds of the day. Thus he made the acquaintance and won the friendship of His Highness Maharaja Sir Nripendra Narayan Bhup of Cooch Behar, Maharaja Sir Rameswar Singh of Darbhanga, Maharaja Sir Jatindra Mohan Tagore, Maharaja Jagadindranath Roy of Natore, Lord Sinha of Raipur, Sir Taraknath Palit, Sir Rash Behari Ghose and others. By this contact he won the heart of Bengal and made the culture and refinement of the house of Tripura well known to the Bengalees. A great reception was accorded to the Maharaja about this time at the Sangit Samaj in Calcutta. Tagore's "Bisharjan" was staged, Rabindra Nath himself taking the principal part. The Maharaja was garlanded by the Maharaja of Natore with a song specially composed and sung by himself. "Bisharjan" has immortalised the house of Tripura in the heart of Bengal and the Sangit Samaj reception was an

enthusiastic demonstration of the esteem in which the Maharaja was held by the people. Radhakishore was a great friend of distressed literarymen. His benefactions to the cause of literature and education and particularly to literary men in distress were varied and numerous. But these gifts were done in greatest secret—a fact that enhanced their value a thousand fold. He was greatly moved to read in the “Sanjibani” of the distress that had befallen the national poet Hemchandra due to blindness and poverty. The Maharaja grew impatient and was not satisfied unless he was able to arrange for him a monthly allowance through Rabindranath. It gave him great relief when he learnt that Hemchandra’s difficulties had been removed and said :—

“I may be a small Ruler but if poet Hemchandra is allowed to end his life miserably in a charitable hospital like Michael Madhusudhan Dutt woe be to the country in which he has been born. If my councillors are not alert in such cases, they will not only commit a great wrong but will also cover me with sin.”—(“Deshiya Rajya”—Colonel Mahim Chandra Deb Barman).

Radhakishore also granted a monthly allowance to Dr. Dinesh Chandra Sen. He followed with keen interest the epoch-making discoveries of the great scientist Sir Jagadish Chandra Bose. One day Sir Jagadish arranged a demonstration of his discoveries at the Presidency College for Rabiudra Nath Tagore and other friends. The Maharaja was not then intimately acquainted with Sir Jagadish but as soon as he heard of it he appeared though uninvited at the college laboratory at the appointed time and surprised one and all by his presence. Though the Maharaja was not well-versed in the English language yet he followed the experiments with such interest that he at once understood their worldwide significance. When Rabindra Nath started raising funds for the erection of a laboratory for Sir Jagadish as private experiments were not permissible in the College Laboratory, the Maharaja made a large donation towards the building fund. His interest for and sympathy with

the work of Sir Jagadish grew intensely and when Sir Jagadish was passing a very anxious time in England trying hard to convince a biased scientific world with the truth he has discovered and was in financial difficulties, the Maharaja wrote him a very sympathetic letter and sent him a big remittance which was pregnant with the fate of a nation. The value of this generous help may better be described in the words of the Scientist himself. In one of his discourses at the Bose Institute Sir Jagadish said :—

“when his experiment brought vividly before him the universal sensitiveness of matter and the outcome of this generalisation in different realms of thought, he had a visit from the late Maharaja of Tipperah Radhakishore Manikya. The Maharaja was a great scholar in the Vernacular, though he was totally unacquainted with English language. According to the prevailing standard, the cultural value of his acquirements would be questioned. But the Maharaja’s ignorance of English did not stand in the way of his instantly realising the significance of the lecturer’s experiments. Indeed his own mind was put to its fullest activity in answering the Maharaja’s most intelligent questionings as regards the trend of his work in clearing up many difficult problems. The reference to this subject may be opportune in view of the controversy whether Akbar the Great was literate or illiterate and whether the University Commission should recommend the Vernacular language as suitable vehicle for scientific instruction. The Government of India sent him on his second scientific deputation to the west to announce his discovery and he experimentally demonstrated before the meeting of Royal Society the sensitiveness of ordinary plants. The discovery was refused publication to reach the scientific world. The period of his deputation was then nearing its end. He had to make his choice of returning to India discredited or overstay in England risking his appointment or the chance of convincing some unbiassed scientific men. While in this dilemma he received a communication from the Maharaja assuring him of his firm belief and also a large remittance towards the possibility of

continuation of his researches. He was thus enabled to prolong his stay and thus secure many true friends among scientific men in England who stood for fair play resulting finally in the acceptance of his work. It was the special request of the late Maharaja that he wished to remain unknown in this connection. He has now passed away and it is permissible to speak now of one who stood by him at a time when such friendship was most needed." (The Englishman, 12th March, 1918.)

No branch of the administration had His Highness' greater attention than the Education and the Medical Departments and no where was his munificence so liberally bestowed.

The Victoria Memorial Hospital erected in memory of the late Queen Empress was an institution in which he took a personal interest.

A great educationist, the Maharaja spent huge sums of money for the spread of education. He established a new High School, a Sanskrit Tol and a number of girls schools and primary schools in different parts of the State. In 1900 the Maharaja opened a free-Boarding school for the Thakur boys and the Kumars of the Raj family. This institution is a living example of His Highness's solicitude for the education of the nobles of the State and the scions of the Raj family. But his crowning achievement was the foundation of a free 2nd grade College at Agartala in 1901 with a band of distinguished scholars as professors. The College proved a great success and soon acquired first grade status. But unfortunately as the policy of the authorities of the Calcutta University was against the establishment of such institutions in small towns in the mufassil, the Maharaja's free college together with some other mufassil colleges was closed, to the great regret of the people.

Special scholarships and stipends were founded to help indigent students for prosecution of studies. Scholarships were also awarded to enthusiastic youngmen including even outsiders to enable them to go to foreign countries for scientific and

industrial education. With a view to encouraging technical education a technical school was established at Agartala which gave a great impetus to the development of cottage industries and handicrafts.

Radha Kishore Manikya engaged Pandit Chandroday Vidyabenode. Editor, Weekly "Hitabadi" to re-edit the original *Rajamala*. The Pandit addressed himself to his task with great devotion and zeal with the result that the book was completed in 1902 in 4 volumes. A few copies were only printed which were meant exclusively for the use of the members of the Raj family and are kept in the palace library.

Sila-Lipi-Sangraha—(Collection of Stone inscriptions)—a work of very great historical importance was also the work of Pandit Chandroday Vidyabenode. The idea of compiling such a work occurred to the Maharaja when he paid a visit to the old palace and temples of Udaypur in 1903 and the Pandit was entrusted with the work. The book was published in 1905 and was recognised as a work of great value. The author had to take great pains in the compilation of the book as he had to travel throughout the length and breadth of the State and of the zamindaries and in jungles and caves to trace the works of art and architecture of a distant past.

In 1907 Pandit Chandroday Vidyabenode also re-edited and published *Brihannaradiya Puran*—a devotional literature from the manuscript translated in verses at the instance of the late Maharaja Govinda Manikya.

Agriculture also attracted Maharaja's personal attention. A model farm for the cultivation of Mulberry, Potato, Sugarcane, Aloes and Rhea was opened. Experiments for silk rearing began in 1904 under the supervision of Mr. Jogesh Chandra Chowdhury who is now the Superintendent of Agriculture, Industries and Commerce. Mr. Chowdhry was sent to Bangalore with a State Scholarship for training in Silk rearing and weaving and subsequently to Japan for completion of studies.

Question of exploring and examining the mineral resources of the State also engaged the attention of the Maharaja.



Ujjayanta Palace at Agartala illuminated on the Dewali Night.

In 1901 distress prevailed in Sonamura and Udaipur divisions due to failure of crop. The kind hearted Maharaja immediately arranged for free distribution of paddy and rice in the affected area. His Highness also arranged for agricultural loans and free distribution of seeds to the cultivators. These measures evoked great admiration from a grateful people.

In 1902 the Maharaja sent his son Prince Brojendra Kishore to the Imperial Cadet Corps for military training while Prince Jatindra Mohan and Prince Nabin Kishore Deb Barman were sent to the Raj Kumar College at Ajmere for higher education and administrative training.

Maharaja Radhakishore attended in 1902 the Coronation Durbar of His Majesty Edward VII with his Councillors and members of personal staff. While at Delhi His Highness made

the acquaintance of many ruling chiefs of western India and Maharaja's genial manners, culture and attractive personality were highly appreciated by all.

In 1903 there was great jubilation in the State and particularly at Agartala owing to the birth of a son to Jubaraj Birendra Kishore. But after a year the State was in the grip of sorrow as the baby prince died.

Sir John Woodburn visited Agartala in July 1904. As this was the first visit of a Lieutenant Governor to the State there were great rejoicings. The honoured guest was given a most cordial reception and to commemorate the occasion a spacious building with accommodation for 50 beds including 10 for contagious cases erected at the Victoria Memorial Hospital at Agartala was opened by His Honour.



Victoria Memorial Hospital at Agartala.

Under the enlightened Maharaja the Public Works Department showed great activities. In 1903 nearly 3 lakhs of rupees was spent for the erection of public buildings and development of Agartala.

In 1905, with a view to give them official training and an insight into the working of the important departments of the State, Jubaraj Birendra Kishore was placed at the head of

the Revenue and Political Departments and Maharaj Kumar Brojendra Kishore who got his training at the Imperial Cadet Crops, at the head of the Police and Military Departments.

The separation of the revenue and police departments was gradually carried out during the year 1905.

In 1906 unseasonable rain injured the cotton and paddy crops of the State. Consequently distress prevailed throughout the State as well as in the Zemindary of the Maharaja within the British Territory. Maharaja Radha Kishore took necessary steps to give prompt relief to the distressed people and ordered the suspension of realisation of rents which amounted in the zamindary alone to over half a lakh of rupees. Mr. Ramani Mohan Chatterjee, M. A. B. L. who was appointed the minister of the State, on the recommendation of Poet Rabindra-Nath Tagore, resigned and was succeeded again by his predecessor Rai Bahadur Uma Kanta Das.

With a view to give an impetus to the newly established Bengal Technical Institute in Calcutta (presently known as The College of Engineering and Technology) the Maharaja visited the Institute and paid a substantial sum as donation and also granted a monthly aid for the maintenance of the same.

A female ward, attached to the Hospital at Agartala, was opened through the munificence of Maharani Tulsibati. It was regarded by the people of the State as well as those of the surrounding British territory as a great boon.

In 1907 the Maharaja reorganised the Police Department thoroughly and the Revenue Officers were relieved of Police duties. The whole State was parcelled out into Police thanas and *Tahasil* circles. Mr. J. C. Dutt who qualified himself from the Dacca Police Training School was appointed Superintendent of Police.

The Maharaja then paid his attention to the Post and Telegraph Departments and after entering into an arrangement with the Imperial Postal authorities opened several Post Offices within the State. Towards the end of the year 1908,

Minister Rai Bahadur Umakanta Das retired and was succeeded by Mr. Annada Charan Gupta.

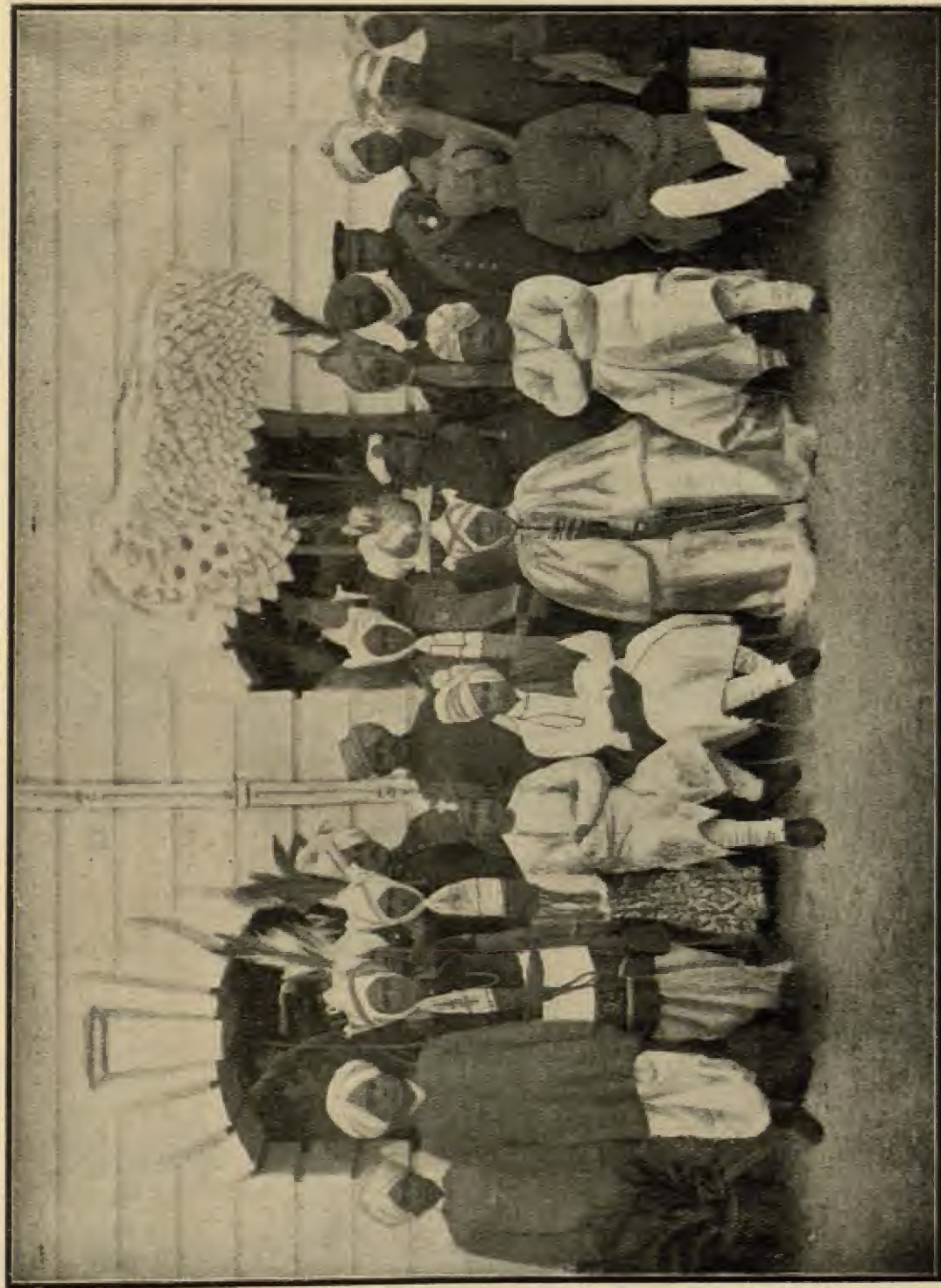
As a result of reorganisation of the administration the gross revenue of the State (excluding the Zemindaries) increased from Rs. 4,74,458 to Rs. 10,08,536. Land revenue was placed on a sound basis, the whole State having been surveyed and settled. In the Zemindaries cadestral survey was finished. Besides the preparation of a valuable record of rights the operations resulted in an increase of Rs. 91,659 in the gross rental of the Estate as it rose from Rs. 5,84,189 to 6,75,848 on the conclusion of the Settlement.

Communications also received due attention, about 100 miles of new roads having been constructed—the most important being the Agartala-Akhaura Road.

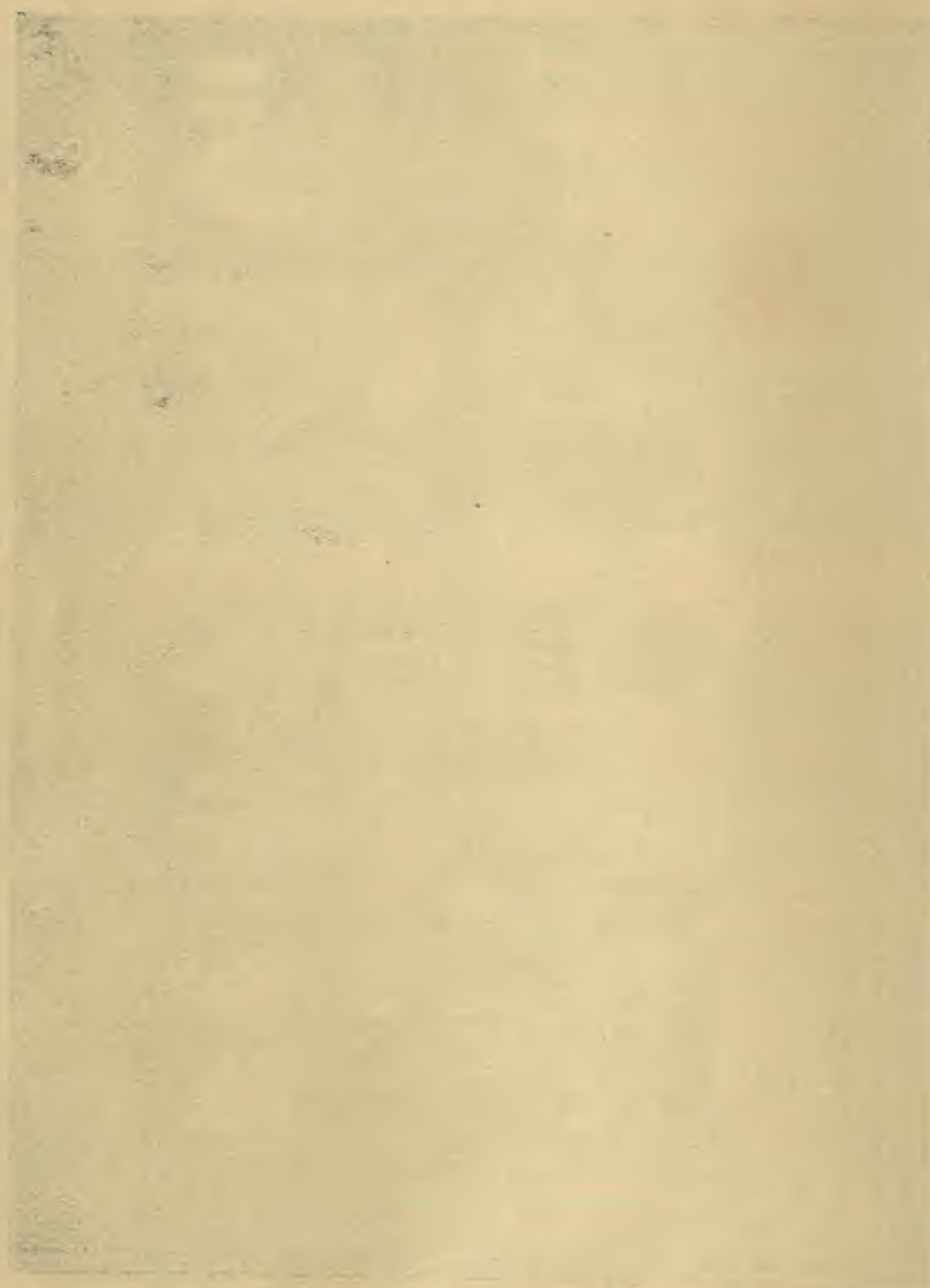
On August 19, 1908 a male issue—His Highness the present Maharaja Bir Bikram Kishore Manikya Bahadur was born to Yubaraj Birendra Kishore—an event which was hailed with great joy throughout the length and breadth of the State as two previous issues died soon after their birth.

In January 1909 His Highness the Maharaja of Manipur paid a visit to the State. The Manipur House has been related to the Tripura Raj family by marriage for a long time and as this was the first time when the heads of both Houses met, the occasion was signalised by great festivities. A Durbar was held in honour of His Highness the Maharaja of Manipur which was attended by the Taluqdars of Nurnagar the most important section of the tenureholders in Roshnabad.

Soon after the departure of the Maharaja of Manipur, Maharaja Radha Kishore Manikya who had a religious turn of mind and was devoting himself to pilgrimage now and then started on his much-desired visit to Benares but alas ! never to return again. He met with a serious motor accident in Benares and breathed his last on March 12, 1909 at the Nandeswar Kuthi of His Highness the Maharaja of Benares where he had been putting up as the guest of the Maharaja.



His Highness Maharaja Chura Chand Singh of Manipur sitting on the right side of the late Maharaja Radha Kishore
Manikya during his visit to Agartala in 1909.



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Birendra Kishore Manikya.

Birendra Kishore Manikya succeeded his father Radha-Kishore Manikya on March 13, 1909 at the age of 25. He was a very popular and talented Ruler. Soon after his accession to the *Gadi* he introduced several important measures which at once made him the idol of the people. Kind and generous and possessed of a calm and peaceful temperament, he based his administration on the love of his people. The result was he secured the hearty and loving co-operation of all who so long used to keep themselves aloof from affairs concerning the management of the State.



Maharaja Birendra Kishore Manikya.
Reproduced from an oil painting preserved in the Palace.

One of the earliest and most popular measures of the new Maharaja was the re-constitution of the *Amatya Sabha* (Advisory Council) with himself as President, his chief officer Mr. Annada Charan Gupta as Vice-President and all the prominent Princes and veteran officials of considerable administrative experience as members of the *Sabha*. He appointed his younger brother Prince Brajendra Kishore as his Private Secretary and on the reversion of the chief officer Mr. Gupta to the Provincial Service of Eastern Bengal and Assam Government his uncle Prince Nabadwip Chandra Deb Barman as minister—steps which demonstrated great foresight and statesmanship. Their wide experience and administrative abilities proved of great help to the State.

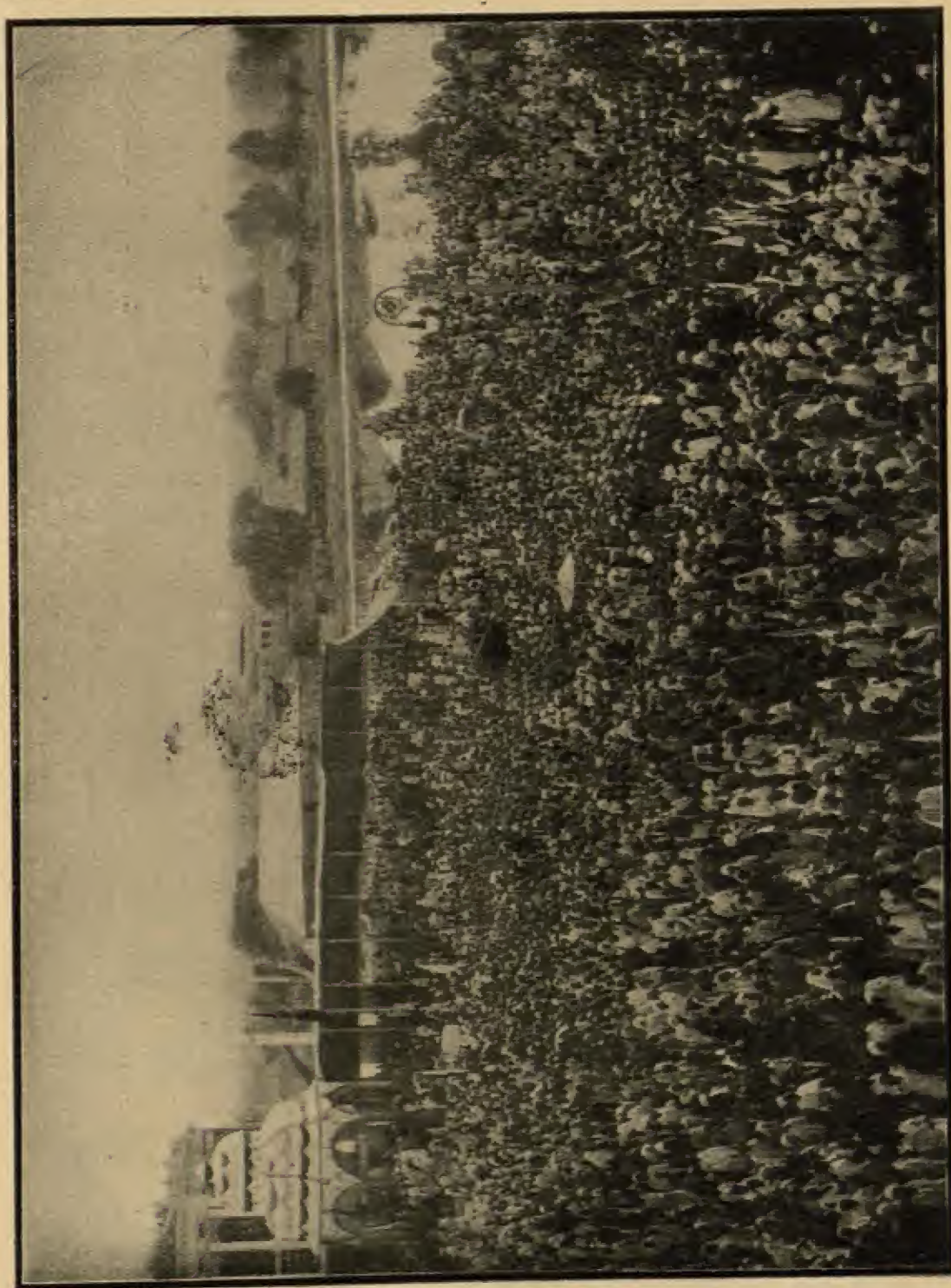


Installation Ceremony of Maharaja Birendra Kishore Manikya.

Reproduced from an oil painting preserved in the Palace.

The installation ceremony of Maharaja Birendra Kishore was performed on Nov. 25, 1909 amidst scenes of great enthusiasm. Sir Lancelet Hare, Lieutenant Governor of Eastern Bengal and Assam, attended the function and in a speech congratulated the Maharaja on his accession and wished success to his administration. Among other distinguished guests was H. H. the Maharaja Chura Chand Singh of Manipur whose presence added to the grandeur of the occasion.

Soon after his installation the Maharaja directed his personal attention towards improvement of the administration and removing grievances that came to his notice. One of his earliest steps was the recruitment of two judges—one a retired Sub-Judge of a British Court of Justice and the other, a



After the Installation Ceremony of Maharaja Birendra Kishore Manikya.



distinguished member of the Comilla Bar. This was a much-needed reform and helped considerably in speedier administration of justice.

In 1911 the Maharaja made extensive tours throughout the length and breadth of the State to get himself personally acquainted with the conditions of his subjects and to study the possibilities of improving them wherever necessary. These tours evoked great expectations among the people and at each of the four divisions of the State which he visited one after another he was accorded most cordial receptions. He began to mix with the people so freely and the visit created so much enthusiasm that His Highness was compelled to overstay everywhere. Amidst the festivities that signalised the passage of His Highness through his territory he did not forget the needs and necessities of the people whose welfare was constantly at his heart. Numerous functions were arranged everywhere by the people of the plains as well as of the hills and the Maharaja earned the gratitude of his people by attending all of them without any regard for personal convenience.

On his return from tour His Highness established several schools and dispensaries in various parts of the State. His tour also impressed on him the necessity of improving the communications. He, therefore, ordered for opening out of distant portions of the State and within a short time all important places were connected with a network of roads.

The Maharaja used to convene the *Amatya Sabha* at short intervals and consult them for advice in every important work of the State.

With a view to placing the financial position of the State on a sound basis the Maharaja appointed a Retrenchment Committee in 1911 with experienced officials of the State and a distinguished non-official expert as members to examine the financial condition of the State and suggest retrenchment wherever practicable consistent with efficiency. The Committee held several sittings and made certain recommendations. But

as these would have involved compulsory retirement of several employees of the State, the Maharaja did not give effect to them and made the alternative suggestion of curtailing expenditure by offering reduction of his own personal allowance. About the same time His Highness exercised his prerogative of mercy and ordered the acquittal of Ibrahim Ali a convict who was condemned to death. These praiseworthy steps earned for him the title of "Birendra Kishore the Merciful."

The year 1911 is also a memorable year in the annals of India when His Majesty King Emperor George V paid his historic visit which roused great enthusiasm throughout the length and breadth of the country. A Coronation Durbar was held in Delhi amidst unprecedented scenes of pomp and grandeur. The Maharaja attended this historic function with his Councillors and his intelligence, refinement and special talents in art, music and science at once created a great impression among his brother Rulers many of whom invited him for a visit to their States and thus he acquired the personal friendship of many of them. He also very greatly impressed the high officials and the foreign and Indian press representatives present on the occasion.

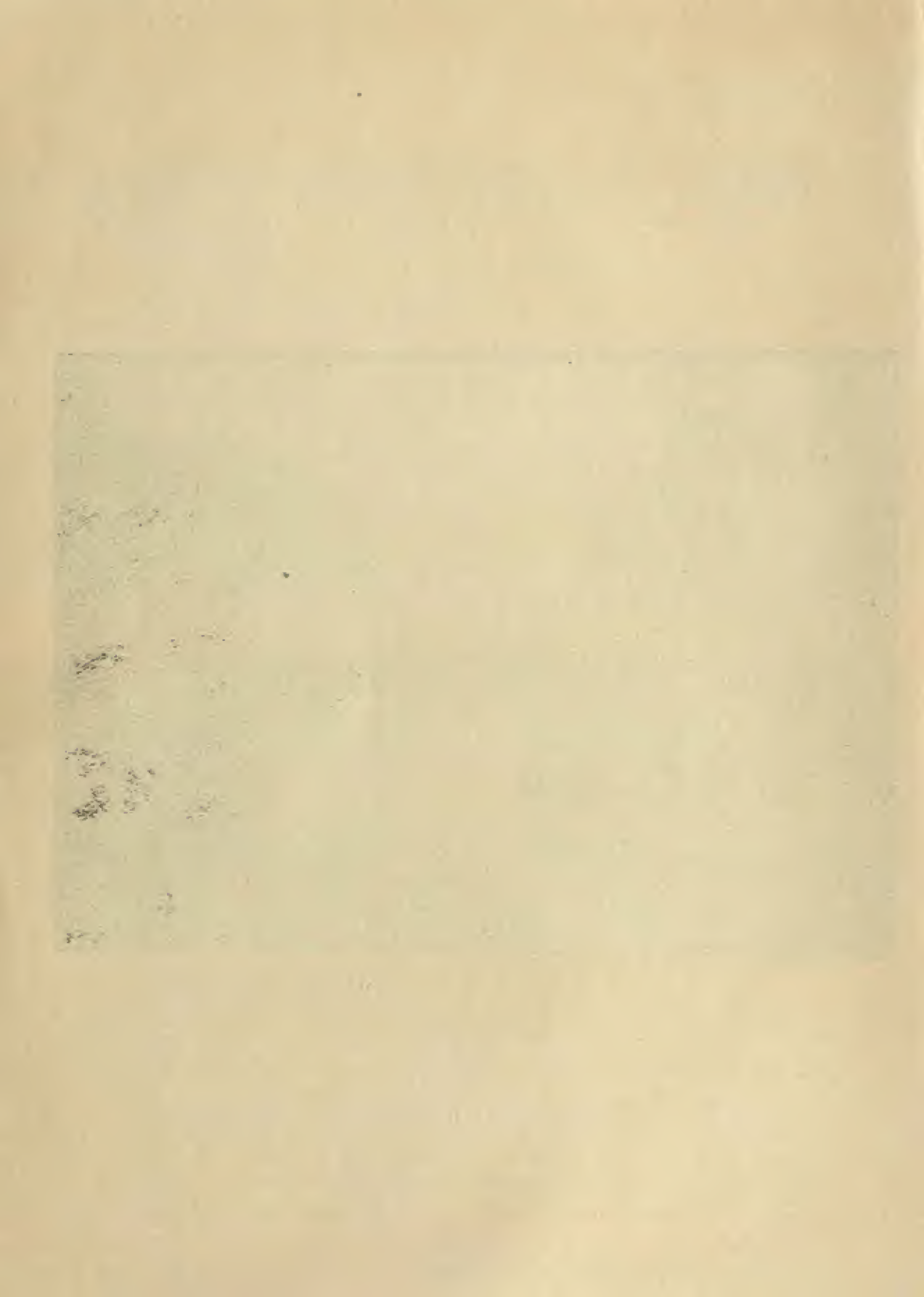
Soon after his return from Delhi the Maharaja directed his attention towards various reforms concerning the welfare of the State and the people. The new Arms Act and the Penal Code Amendment Act were passed.

Arrangements were made for producing silk on an extensive scale. The area of the Silk Farm was therefore extended and further experiments on Silk-rearing and Weaving were undertaken.

The Maharaja was convinced that until and unless the people of the country were scientifically trained for agriculture the condition of his subjects the majority of whom derived their sustenance from agriculture, could not be improved. He, therefore, opened a Model School for agricultural and sericultural education and training.



A panoramic view of the Gumti River.





JHOOLAN.

Reproduced from the original painting of Maharaja Birendra Kishore Manikya.



His Excellency Lord Carmichael, the Governor of Bengal with Lady Carmichael visited Agartala in February 1913 and stayed for 2 days as the state guest. His Excellency, who had already made himself popular by his conciliatory policy in the administration of Madras and Bengal, was accorded a unique reception. Possessed of equally calm and sweet temperament both His Excellency and the young Maharaja found great pleasure in each others company and hours were passed in most happy conversations. Numerous entertainments were arranged by the Maharaja to make His Excellency's visit as pleasant and comfortable as possible. To commemorate the occasion His Excellency was requested to lay the foundation stone of a bridge over the Houra river which he did with great pleasure. The



Main gate in front of the Palace at Agartala.

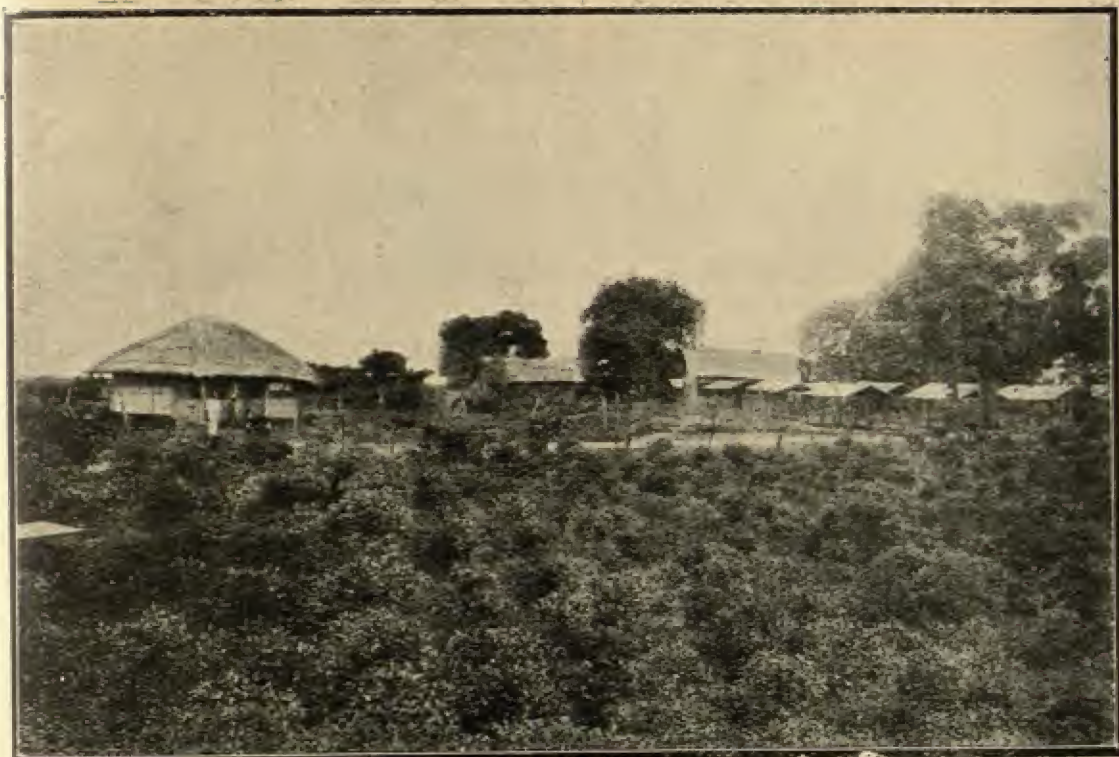
function was attended by thousands of people of the State as well as of the neighbouring British territory. The bridge after

its completion has been appropriately named as the Carmichael Bridge and commands a very important position connecting as it does the capital of the State with the southern divisions.

In 1914, "on the outbreak of the Great European War, His Highness placed his personal services and the resources of his State at the disposal of the Imperial Government and he gave a suitable donation to the Provincial War Relief Fund a branch of which was successfully started in the State" (Bengal Administration Report 1914-15).

In 1915 His Highness appointed Rai Bahadur P. K. Das-Gupta, manager of Chakla Roshnabad and a member of Bengal Provincial Service, as Chief Dewan and with his help inaugurated a number of reforms which "materially improved the administration and developed the resources of the State." One of the important steps taken by the Maharaja for improved administration was the introduction of the State Civil Service examination for recruitment of higher officers of the State with graded scale of salaries. This attracted youngmen of education and ability to compete in the examination. In the same year His Highness paid a donation to the British Ambulance Committee through H. H. The Duke of Portland for the maintenance of an Ambulance Car in France for a year. This patriotic and humanitarian action of the Maharaja was very much appreciated by the Committee as well as by the British public.

During the year heavy floods occurred in almost all parts of the State and in the Zemindary. Considerable damage was done to property and live stock and great distress prevailed all over the State. At the instance of the Maharaja prompt relief measures were undertaken on an extensive scale and paddy, rice and pulses etc. were imported from outside the state territory to cope with the situation. The floods also affected the public health of the State. There were outbreaks of cholera, dysentery and other diseases in several parts of the territory. Immediate arrangements were made by the Maharaja to render



View of the cultivation in Davendranagar Tea Estate of Central Tippera Tea Co., Ltd,



His Highness The Maharaja Manikya Bahadur
at the age of 4 years.



His Highness The Maharaja Manikya Bahadur
at the age of 11 years.



His Highness The Maharaja Manikya Bahadur
at the age of 18 years.



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medical help to the sufferers as well as to check the progress of the epidemics. These beneficent measures had their desired effect. The State was not only free from disease within a very short time but the people were also able to tide over their difficulties and recoup their losses to a considerable extent.



Kunjaban Palace.

One of the most important measures of far reaching importance in the material progress of the State undertaken by the Maharaja in 1916 was the introduction of steps for the development of the extensive waste land of the State which has led to the establishments of an important and growing industry in the opening of tea gardens. Dr. A. C. Bhattacharyya Ph.D., who while in Germany arranged to get several samples of Tripura soils sent from home and had these examined at the Prussian Government Agricultural Institute of Halle a. S started soon after his return to India a Chemical Laboratory and continued to carry on examination of soils of Tripura which gave extremely satisfactory results. Dr. Bhattacharyya at once approached the Chief Dewan Rai Bahadur P. K. Das Gupta and impressed upon him the great possibilities of Tripura soil for tea cultivation. His suggestion was acted upon with the result that the foundation of a big industry was soon laid. To quote from *"Tea culti-

* "Chunta Prakash" Extraordinary issue, 16th January 1930.

vation in Tripura." by Mr Girija Mohan Sanyal, the Managing Director of Harishnagar Tea Co., Ltd.—

"In the meantime an enthusiastic young chemist of Tripura, my friend Dr. A. C. Bhattacharyya Ph.D., published his first report on the soils of Tripura State strongly recommending the soils as suitable for tea cultivation, as he found the soils to be as good as that of Surma Valley. The gardens in the Tripura State were then opened one after another. During the brief period of 11 years as many as 40 gardens have been started. Up-to-date well equipped factories have been erected in some of the gardens and most of the gardens are progressing fairly well."

The great importance of this step will be apparent from the fact that numerous waste and dreary tracts have been cleared and transformed into smiling lands humming with the noise and bustle of factory labourers who are daily flocking to the State and establishing a big labour colony with immense future possibilities in the agricultural developement of the State. The gardens have not only been a good source of income to the State but are also affording employment to the labouring



View of Ujjayanta Palace from Kunjaban hillock.

population of the State. The aggregate capital invested by the tea concerns in the State is more than a crore of rupees. This



His Highness The Maharaja Manikya Bahadur at the age of 7 years.

farsighted step reflects great credit on the Maharaja but for whose personal interest the experiment would not have proved as great a success as it did—an experiment from which the State is now deriving manifold benefits.

Maharaja Birendra Kishore was also anxious to have the mineral resources of the State explored and soon after his accession to the *Gadi* appointed the wellknown Geologist Mr. Ashoke Bose for geological and minerological survey of the State. Mr. Bose started work with great earnestness and all possible facilities were afforded him by the State but unfortunately he died suddenly without achieving any mentionable result. Consequently the Maharaja granted in 1916, Messrs Burma Oil Co. Ltd. a license for exploring the State territory.

About this time with a view to completely reorganising the educational system of the State the Maharaja sent Mr. Somendra Chandra Deb Barman, a State scholar of Tagore's International University at Bolpore, with Dr. Rabindra Nath Tagore to America for training in up-to-date educational methods. Mr. Deb Barman joined the renowned University of Harvard from which he took his M. A. degree and carried on further studies in Pedagogy and Child's Psychology. On his return he was placed in charge of the Educational Department of the State—a post which he is still holding with great credit and success.

On March 4, 1918, His Excellency Lord Ronaldshay the Governor of Bengal, paid a visit to Agartala when he opened the Carmichael Bridge, the foundation of which was laid by his predecessor Lord Carmichael and also of the famous Ronaldshay Road connecting the Capital with Bishalgarh. Opening of this road has led to the development of daily motor service between Agartala and Bishalgarh Bazar. This has also made it possible to reach *Tripureswari Temple* at Udaypur by motor. His Excellency also opened the Industrial and Agricultural Exhibition held at Agartala with a brilliant

collection of home industry, including handicrafts, various kinds of Silk, Ivory, Horn, Hide, Wood, Cane, Bamboo and earthen products, wonderful specimens of Tripura, Manipuri and other hill people's fine needle work, besides multifarious other things recieved from outside the State. The exhibition was a great success to which the original sauce and oil paintings of His Highness the Maharaja Manikya Bahadur, very costly furniture and wood works made by Prince Brojendra Kishore Deb Barman and other Princes as well as valuable Cotton, Silk and Woolen fabrics woven and embroidered by the ladies of the Raj family contributed largely.

His Highness made a further big donation of a Lakh of Rupees to the War Fund, and for the encouragement of recruitment of Soldiers amongst his State Subjects, offered donations of Rs. 25/- or a free gift of 6 Bighas of land to each recruit. These offers were very much appreciated by the Governor of Bengal.

Besides the Carmichael Bridge, the Kunjaban (garden) palace, office of the Minister and many other office buildings were completed at the instance of the Maharaja. The Kunjaban palace, standing as it does on a picturesque hillock is a thing of beauty and joy. The Maharaja also built the temple of Lakshmi Narayan the family deity which stands as a living memory to his piety and religious devotion. The famous Siva temple of Chandranath in Chittagong hills where thaousands of pilgrims flock every year was thoroughly repaired according to the desire of the Maharaja. The Maharaja also got a big *Dharmasala* built at Chandranath for the convenience of pilgrims.

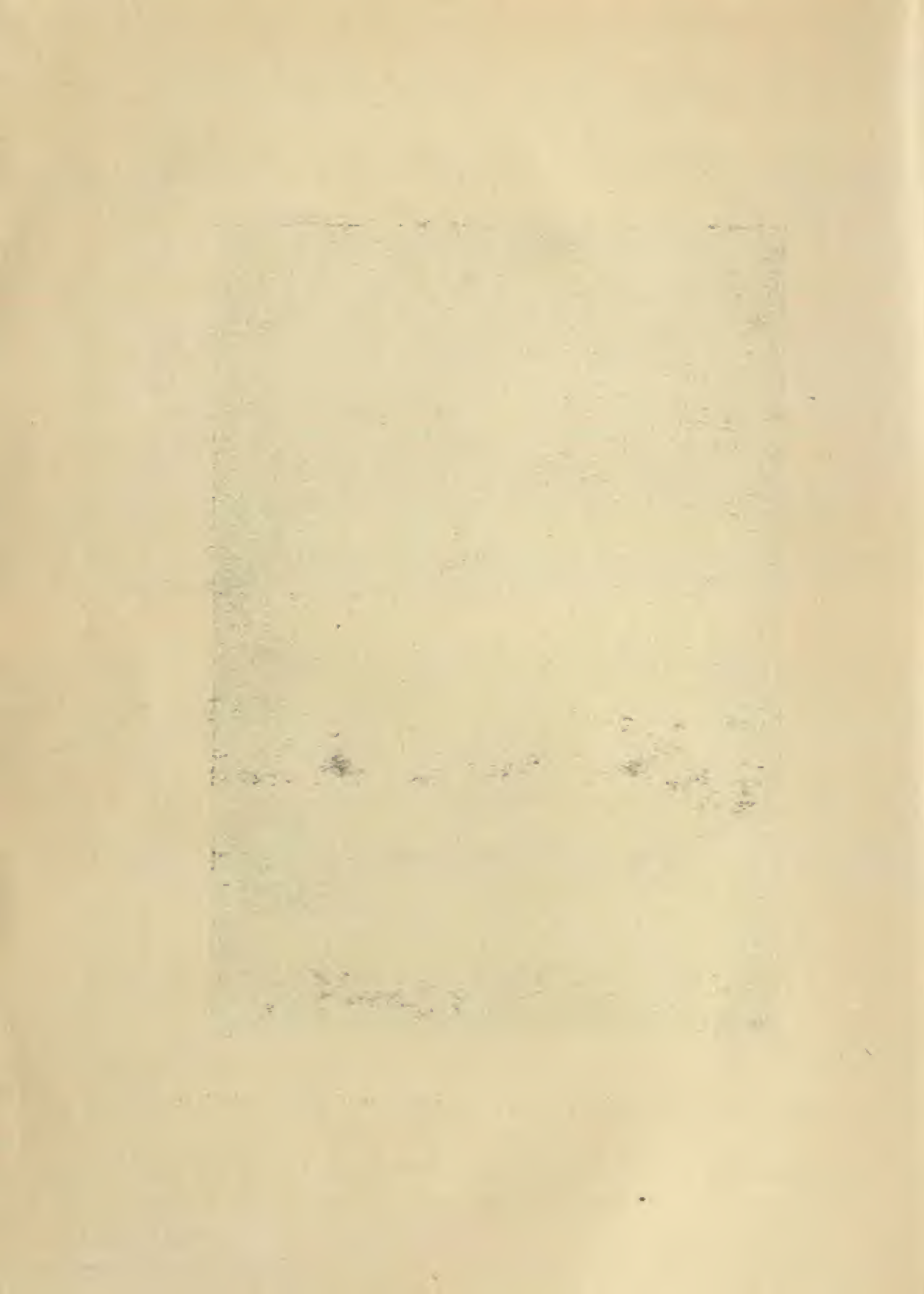
In 1919 a severe epedemic of influenza took over nearly 3500 lives inspite of all possible preventive and curative measures adopted by the State.

During this year the Governor of Bengal again visited Agartala and was accorded a grand reception. A State Banquet and a State Durbar were held which evoked great enthusiasm.



HERMIT.

Reproduced from the original painting of Maharaja Birendra Kishore Manikya



During the same year leases were granted of 24,000 acres of land for Tea Cultivation.

In 1921, when His Royal Highness the Duke of Connaught came out to India Maharaja Birendra Kishore met him at Calcutta and also in Delhi. The Maharaja had a very pleasant time in both the places.

In the same year to foster the growth of the weaving industry within the State sanction was given to the proposal for teaching weaving in the Artisan School as well as in all other High Schools

The Maharaja suffered from a protracted illness from September, 1921 to January 1922 and found himself unable to attend to State business until the end of the year. This unfortunate illness deprived the Maharaja of the pleasure of meeting His Royal Highness The Prince of Wales. But he sent Jubaraj Bir Bikram Kishore to Calcutta who had the honour of an introduction to His Royal Highness. Jubaraj Bahadur was at that time only 12 years of age but his beautiful appearance, smart bearing, sharp intelligence, fine culture and refinement attracted the attention of His Royal Highness as also of the officers of his Royal Highness's personal staff. In November 1922, Maharaja Birendra Kishore had the pleasure of a private interview with His Excellency the Viceroy and thereafter also with the Governor of Bengal in Calcutta.

In 1923 Maharaja's illness suddenly took a turn for the worse and His Highness died on August 13, at the comparatively young age of 40 only. This calamity plunged the State in universal grief. The great love and esteem in which he was held by the people found expression in the spontaneous outburst of deep mourning. A great administrator, a farsighted statesman and a patriotic Ruler he was the idol of his people. Calm and peace-loving by temperament,—he was a great philosopher—a poet and a thinker and found great pleasure in the cultivation and culture of the fine arts. He was a first class artist and an expert painter and used to delve deeper into the charms and beauties of

Nature which found numerous expressions on canvass through his brush. Some of the pictures drawn by him will be found in these pages. They will show the rare and great excellence he achieved in painting. He also used to take great pleasure in clay modelling and carried the art to such perfection that he himself used to undertake the painting and decoration of family deities before the annual Durga Puja festival. No wonder the death of such a prince was universally mourned.

During the reign of Maharaja Birendra Kishore Manikya Prince Mahendra Chandra Dev Barman took up the work of re-editing *Rajmala*. The prince began work in collaboration with Pandit Gopal Chandra Kabya-Byakaranathirtha but before they proceeded far Pandit Amulya Charan Bidyabhushan of Calcutta approached the Maharaja with some valuable suggestions. As the Pandit Bidyabhushan is connected with the Bangiya Sahitya Parishat (Bengal Literary Society) the foremost representative institute of the literateure of Bengal, the Maharaja naturally accepted his suggestions and entrusted him with this great work. But unfortunately for various reasons the Pandit's work proved useless. During this time Pandit Kali Prasanna Sen Bidyabhushan who was engaged in re-editing and publishing some rare munscripsts of Vaishnava literature and had then completed his valuable work "Gita-Chandroday" of renowned poet Ghanasyam Das was entrusted with the work of re-editing "*Rajmala*" which is still proceeding. Up to now three volumes with numerous illustrations, maps, notes and commentaries have been published. It is a monumental work and is being greatly appreciated by all. The book will cover another three such volumes.



FLUTE TEACHING LESSON.

Reproduced from the original painting of Maharaja Birendra Kishore Manikya.



His Highness The Maharaja Manikya Bahadur at the age of 15 years.



CHAPTER VI.

The Present Regime.

His Highness the Maharaja Bir Bikram Kishore Manikya Bahadur succeeded his father on the 14th August 1923 at the young age of 16 only. The succession was publicly announced at a Durbar. His Highness achieved legal majority under the law governing the Tripura Ruling family but the administration of the State was entrusted to a Council of Administration to afford time to the Maharaja to complete his education and training.

Inaugurated on the 9th December, 1923, the Council of Administration which consisted of Prince Nabadwip Chandra Deb Barman (President), Rai Bahadur Jyotish Chandra Sen (Vice-President), Prince Brojendra Kishore Deb Barman and Thakur Pratap Chandra Roy had about four years' existence.

Though placed in a peculiar and delicate situation, yet with the active sympathy and goodwill of His Highness the Maharaja and the co-operation of Their Highnesses the Dowager Maharanees, the Council was able to render a very good account of itself within the short period of its existence. Early steps were taken by the Council on assumption of charge to place the finances of the State on a sound footing. The



Maharaja Bir Bikram Kishore Manikya Bahadur.

Reproduced from the original painting preserved in the Palace.

Budget was revised and retrenchment was effected in various directions. An up-to-date inventory of liabilities was drawn up and schemes formulated for gradual repayment of loans and adjustment of old advances. Early in 1924, a committee was appointed to scrutinise all outstanding claims and the total amount as representing the liabilities at the death of the late Maharaja Birendra Kishore Manikya Bahadur was ascertained. All outside claims were paid off by the end of 1925, partially with the help of the sum of Rs. 2,03,000/- which Their Highnesses the Maharanees in a commendable spirit of sacrifice deposited in the Treasury at a very low rate of interest. The income which began to rise from year to year was unprecedented during the year 1926 when the entire liabilities inclusive of the deposit of Their Highnesses the Maharanees were paid off and the closing balance of the year 1926-27 rose to Rs. 10,59,982/- against Rs. 2,37,620/- in 1922-23. Another noticeable feature of the financial administration was the vigorous adjustment and substantial reduction of old advances by far the greater portion of which represented expenditure previously incurred without Budget provision.

With regard to reforms though the Council had necessarily to adopt a policy more or less cautious, yet it was not inattentive to legitimate demands as the following items of expenditure representing public works of utility as well as educational and other measures of importance completed during the administration of the Council will show :—

Khas Adalat Buildings—Rs. 90,227/- ; Jail Buildings—Rs. 23,786/- ; Extension of the Administration Buildings—Rs. 55,161/- : Guest House Building—Rs. 46,145/- : Stone metalling of the State portion of the Akhaura-Agartala Road—Rs. 32,786/- : Stone metalling of the British portion of the Akhaura-Agartala Road—Rs. 44,872/- : Bishalgarh-Udaipur Road—Rs. 47,114/- : Purchase of Property—Rs. 90,000/- : Grain allowance paid to officers—Rs. 1,21,201/- and Special Educational grants—Rs. 34,150/-.



Opening of the newly constructed Jail Building during the period of Council of Administration.

The administrative training of the young Maharaja commenced during the year 1924 under the supervision of the guardian tutor Lt. O. C. Pulley and with the active co-operation of the Political Agent Mr. A. J. Dash. His Highness also attended a course of military training in 1925. Possessed of a sharp and acute intellect, a brilliant memory and a receptive mind the Maharaja picked up things very quickly and received an all round education within an incredibly short period of time.



Lt. Col. O. C. Pulley.
Formerly guardian tutor to His Highness the Maharaja, at present Chief Staff Officer.

The Investiture Ceremony.

The Investiture ceremony of His Highness took place on his 20th birthday on August 19, 1927 while the *Shastric* ceremony of *Rajyabhishek* or installation followed on January 29, 1928. Both evoked unique enthusiasm. The Investiture Durbar was largely attended by distinguished guests including His Excellency the Governor of Bengal and Lady Jackson who were accorded a befitting reception. After imposing ceremonials and customary exchange of presents His Excellency offered His Highness the Viceroy's congratulations and in a neat speech added his own good wishes and felicitations. A number of interesting functions followed ending in a State Banquet. His Highness was presented with a number of addresses by different sections of the people and representative associations offering felicitations on His Highness' assumption of administration and expressing the unbounded feelings of joy raised in the minds of the people. This was followed by the Public Audience and the



H. H. the Maharaja with H. E. the Governor and Lady Jackson
after the Investiture Durbar.



After the investiture (In August, 1929.)

(Sitting) Mr. Tufnel Barret (Under Secy to Government of Bengal), Prince Jyotirendra Ch. Deb Burman, Mr. Prentice (Chief Secy. Govt. of Bengal), Mahamanya Prince B. K. Deb Burman, His Highness The Maharaja Manikya Bahadur, Lady Jackson, H. E. Sir, Stanley Jackson (Governor of Bengal), Mahamanya Prince N. C. Deb Burman, Mr. Graham (P. S. to H. E. the Governor of Bengal), Lady Attendant to Her Excellency, Manyabar J. C. Sen (Minister of Tripura State), Surgeon to His Excellency.

Nazar Durbar. The first was attended by a huge gathering of people forming the Commoners while the second by the pick of the State Society.



State Crown of Tripura.

Soon after assumption of administration His Highness directed his attention towards re-organisation of State affairs and appointed Rai Jyotish Chandra Sen Bahadur, Vice-President of the retiring Council, as Minister and Manager of the Zemin-daries, Dewan Bejoy Kumar Sen as Chief Secretary, Rana Bodh-jung Bahadur as his Private Secretary, Mr. Kamala Prasad Dutt as Assistant Private Secretary and Captain Kumar Prafulla Kumar Deb Barman as Military Secretary.

His Highness also appointed an Advisory Council with himself as President, Prince Nabadwip Chandra Deb Barman Bahadur as Vice-President and Prince Brajendra Kishore Deb Barman Bahadur, Uzir Braja Krishna Deb Barman Saheb, the Minister and the Chief Secretary as members.

The Privy Purse was separated from the general administration and placed in charge of Mr. Anukul Chandra Mukherjee, formerly tutor to His Highness and the Military Department was brought under His Highness' direct control.

The Installation Ceremony.

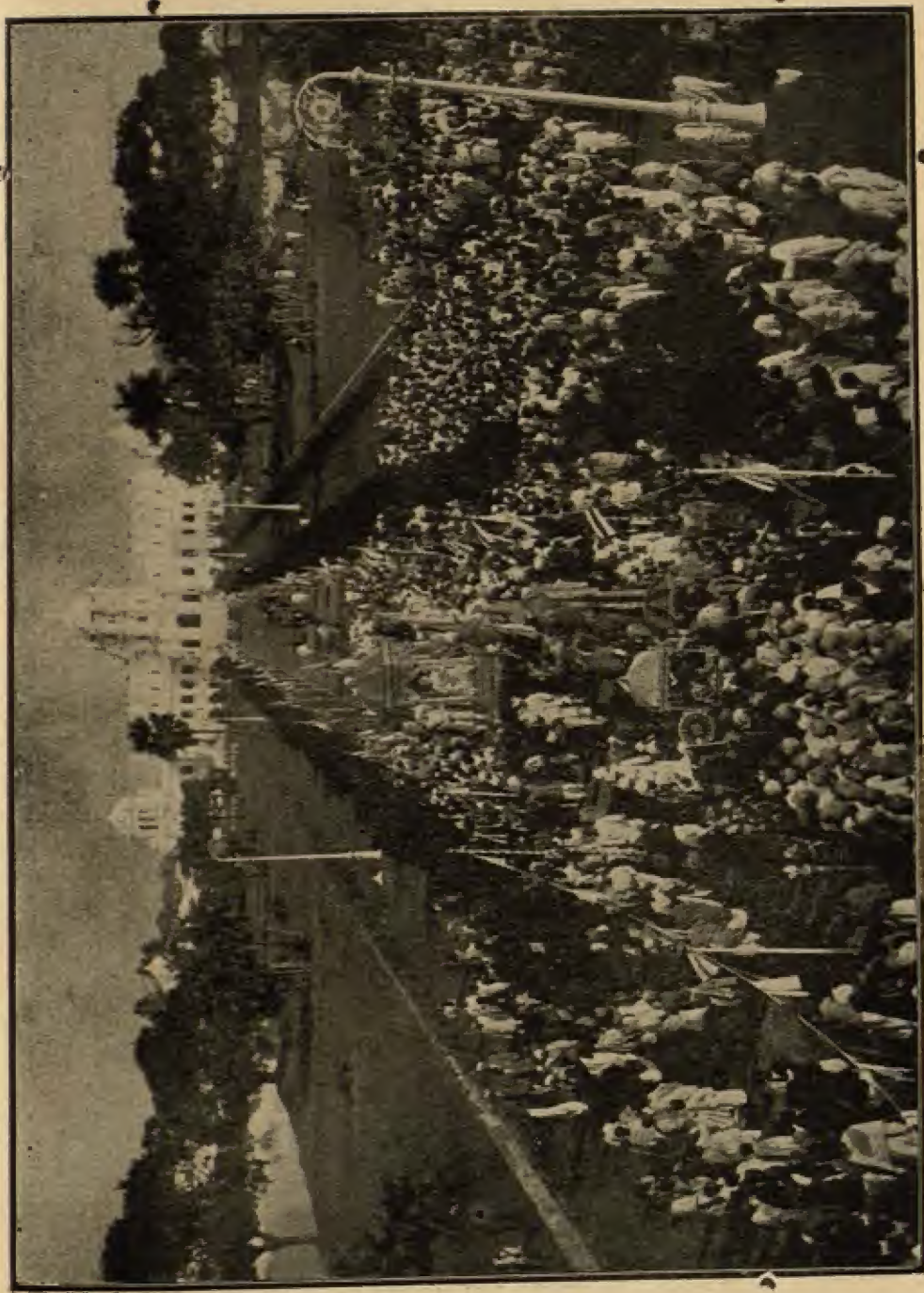
The *Rajyabhishek* or Installation ceremony of His Highness came off on the 29th January, 1928, amidst scenes of unprecedented enthusiasm. The usual sanctified ceremonies coupled with the traditional grandeur of His Highness' family

were all observed in a manner befitting the ancient Raj family of Tripura. The festivities lasted for five days. Visitors and guests began pouring in from a week earlier and by the 27th January, there was a tremendous rush of people crowding the public thoroughfares throughout day and night in a manner never seen before. There was a continuous round of festivities in which one and all participated wholeheartedly.

An estimate of the vast assemblage could be gathered from the fact that as many as 80,000 tickets were collected at Akhaura Station on the A. B. Ry. on the occasion, besides thousands who had to walk on foot from distant villages. Among the distinguished guests who attended the ceremony were :—The Nawab Bahadur of Murshidabad, H. H. the Rajah Sahab of Kotla, the Rajah of Protapgarh, the representative of Dhulpur Durbar, the Hon'ble Nawab Mussruff Hussain—the then Minister, Government of Bengal and Sir Jagadish Chandra Bose. A large number of tributaries of His Highness and the landholders of the Tripura State and Estate in the British territory also attended the ceremony, besides a large number of distinguished public men of Tippera and other districts. It was a representative gathering of princes, landholders, taluqdars, merchants and public men. On a most moderate estimate at least two hundred thousand people participated in the festivities.

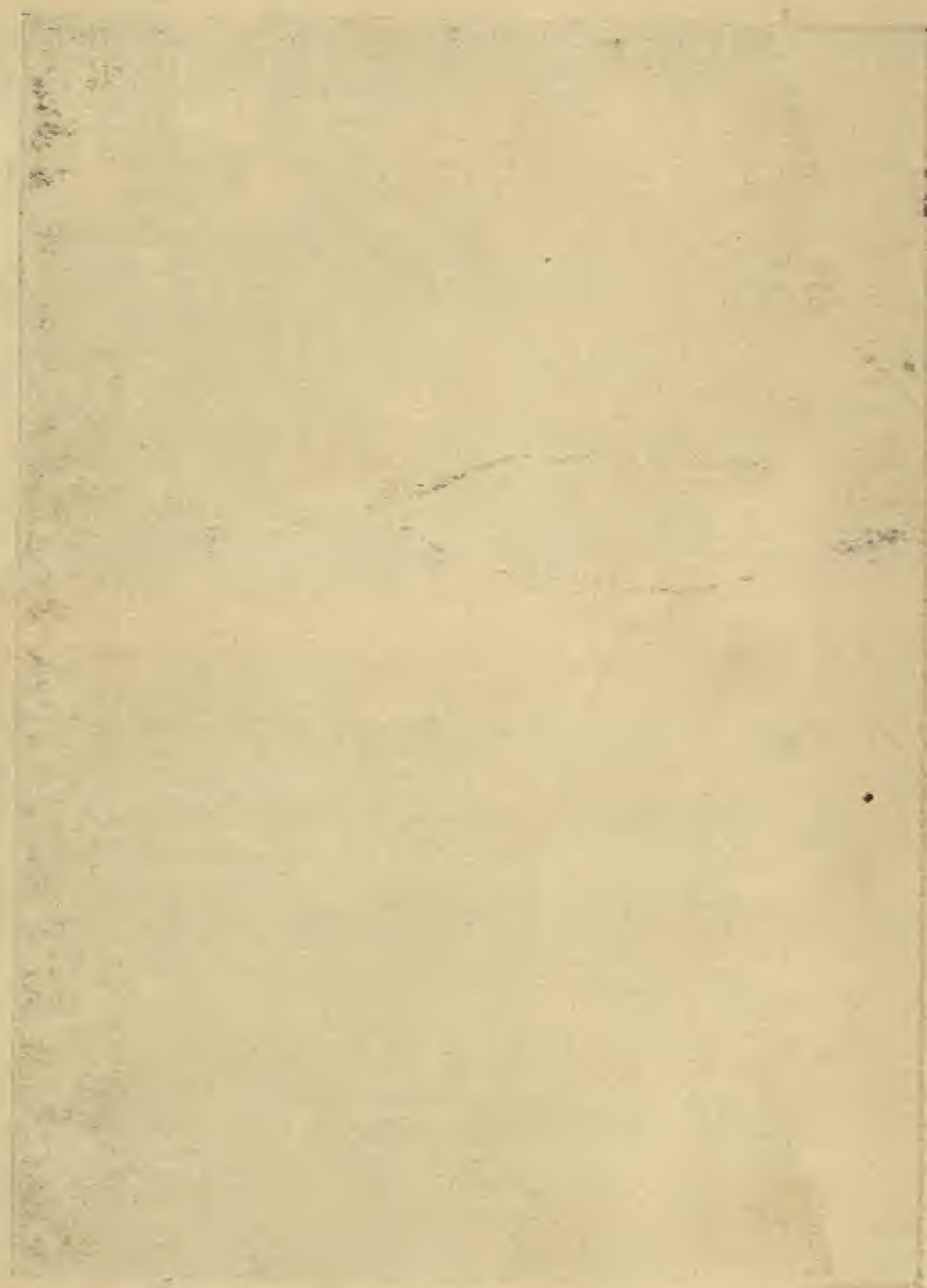
The Installation ceremony of the Maharajas of Tripura is a religious ceremony performed according to the orthodox rites of the Hindu *Shastras*, regularly observed by the ancient princes of this celebrated Lunar Dynasty ; and on this auspicious occasion also the religious injunctions were scrupulously observed. And this evoked widespread admiration for the Maharaja as the function is linked with a past hallowed with tradition.

The relevant religious ceremonials commenced from the early morning of the 27th January. His Highness offered



Procession leading to the Installation Pandal (Inside the main gate).

1



oblations to his ancestors on that day and performed worship of the family deities with due solemnities. Pujas were also performed in all the principal temples of the State. The function included also presentation of gifts of cows, gold and silver etc, to the Brahmins. His Highness most gladly imposed upon himself all the rigours and restraints sanctioned by the *Shastras*.

January 29, 1928, will remain a memorable day in the history of Tripura. Long before the day dawned streams of people began to pour in from different directions and at sun-rise Agartala became a veritable sea of human heads, a tumultuous and surging crowd making for the huge pandal to pay a contented people's homage to their beloved prince. The sound of conch-shells and ringing of bells in the temples, recital of Vedic hymns in the palace and prayers in the mosques added a solemn serenity. His Highness emerged at the palace gate and ascended the *Chaturdola* in front of the Ujjayanta Palace and was taken in a huge procession. As soon as His Highness made a move 13 guns were fired to signify His Highness' departure towards the pandal. The procession at once imposing and picturesque was headed by the most beautifully decorated elephant *Ganesh* having at its back the Raj ensigns *Kapithwaja* and *Damama* declaring with their grave and solemn sound the arrival of His Highness the Maharaja Manikya Bahadur. It was followed by the devoted Manipuri Vaisnavas clad in white cloth and yellow *turbans* singing *kirtan* and dancing to the tune of the *kartal* and the *mridanga*. Then followed Sri Sri Lakshmi Naryanji on the *Chaturdola* with Pandits chanting *mantras* and invoking the Almighty for His divine blessings. Twelve *chopdaras* and six body guards clad in their gorgeous dresses walked in military order followed by the Aide-camps seated on beautifully decorated *Howdas* impregnated with valuable jewels on a most imposing elephant. Then followed His Highness Maharaja Maha-Mohodaya Bir Bikram Kishore Manikya Bahadur seated on *Chaturdola*. The Maharaja, a picture of health and beauty, looked brilliant in

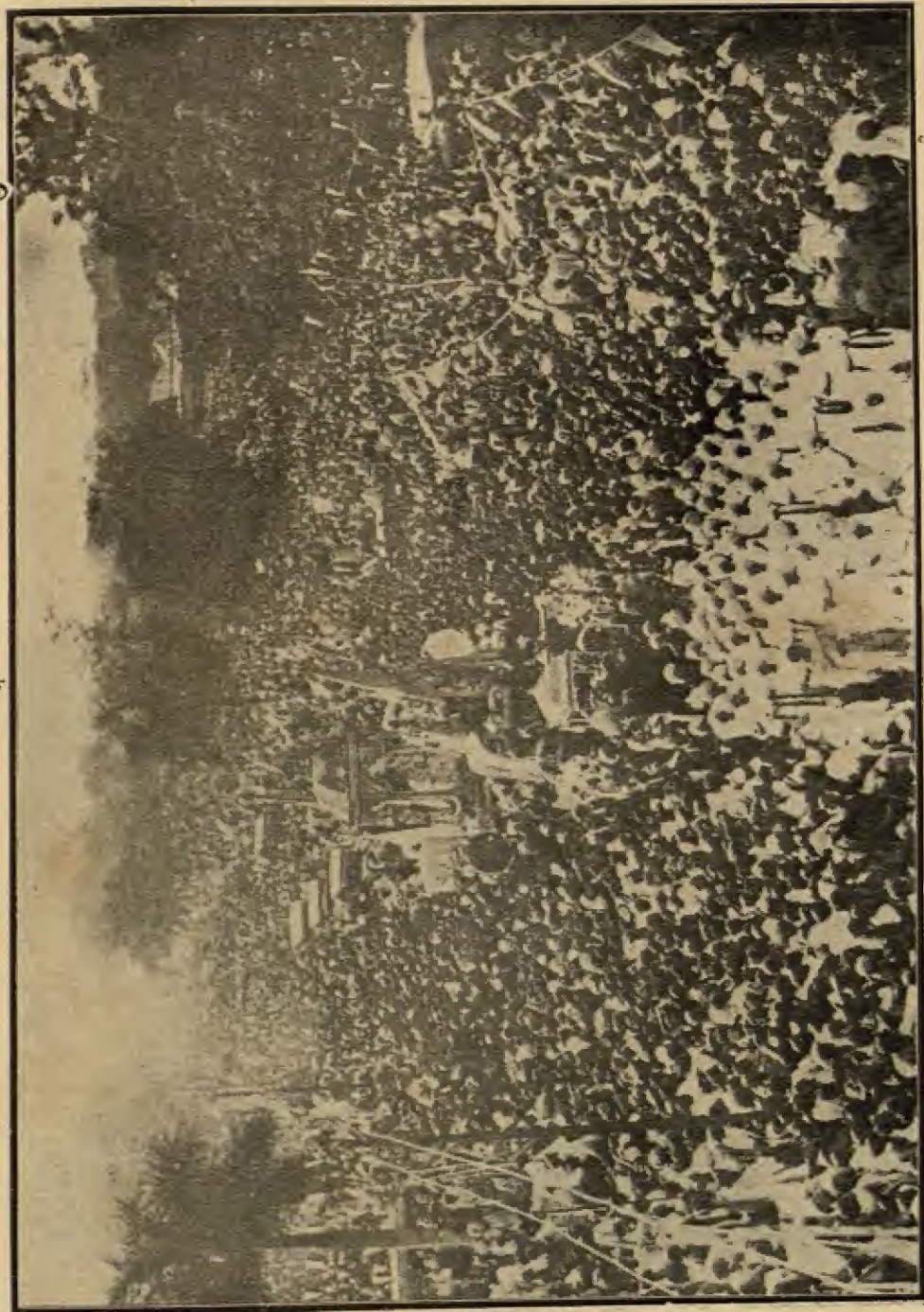
sparkling sunshine and created a marvellous impression on all who had the good fortune to have a glance of him. The procession moved on with a solemnity all its own through the vast



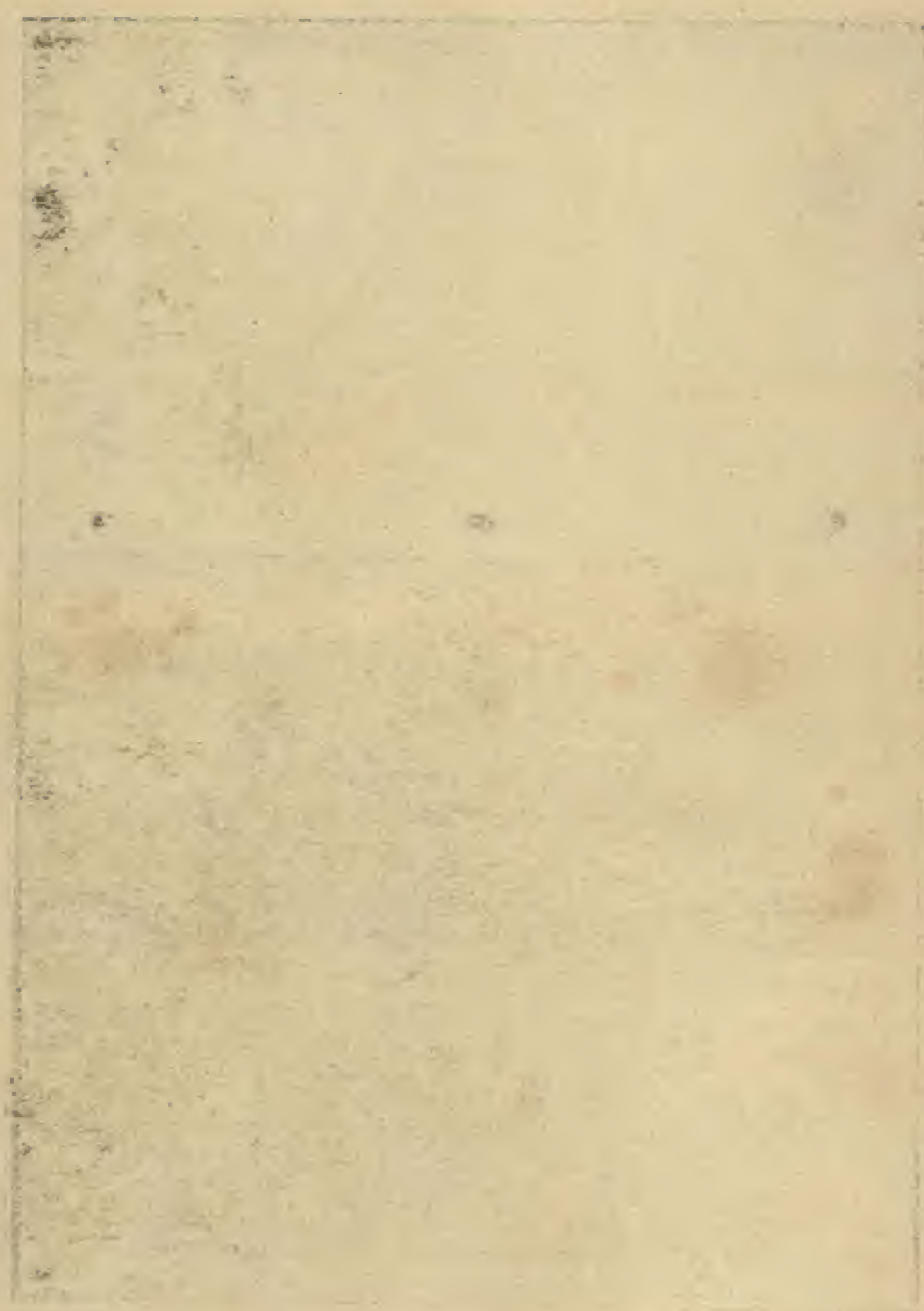
His Highness the Maharaja Manikya Bahadur in *Chaturdola*.

crowd amidst cries of "*Jai Maharaja Manikya Bahadurki Jai*" which were echoed and re-echoed as the procession wended its slow course. All house-tops and balconies were crowded and ladies added to the beauty of the occasion by blowing conch shells and raising *ulu-dhwani*.

Referring to the procession the *Statesman* wrote :—"The procession from the Ujjayanta Palace to the Pandal defied description. Huge elephants, richly caprisoned, carrying *Howdas* that sparkled with gems worth a king's ransom, participated. The bejeweled *Chaturdola* borne by a score of scarlet-clad bearers in which His Highness journeyed to the Pandal glittered with thousand gems, and the dress worn by His Highness conveyed subtle suggestion of illimitable wealth. The whole epitomized the immemorial wealth and splendour of the East."



Procession leading to the installation Pandal. (outside the main gate)



A commodious and picturesque amphitheatre was erected for installation and as the day dawned the *durbaries* in black with saffron *pagrees* began to take their respective seats. The galleries on the left also were soon crowded with tributary chiefs and hill *sardars*. First entered the Kukeeraj Lalchhut Gama with his followers in awe inspiring costumes. Ringing a big Chinese bell and other hilly instruments the Kukees created a great impression. The Kukeeraj was followed by the Lusai Raj Rang Bhunga, Kukee-Sardar Murshaliana, Lusai Sardar Thangriana, Kankajoy Bahadur—the Sardars of Dhumachara, L. Tawai—Chief of Chhachhak Range and other *sardars*. Their fantastic hilly costumes, powerful demeanour, heavy foot steps and iron constitution excited the admiration of all.



Installation of His Highness the Maharaja Bir Bikram Kishore Manikya Bahadur.

Amidst the chanting of Vedic hymns and invoking of divine blessings the Maharaja Bahadur ascended the dais. His Highness first offered floral offerings at the feet of Laksmi Narayanji



Installation of His Highness the Maharaja Bir Bikram Kishore Manikya Bahadur.

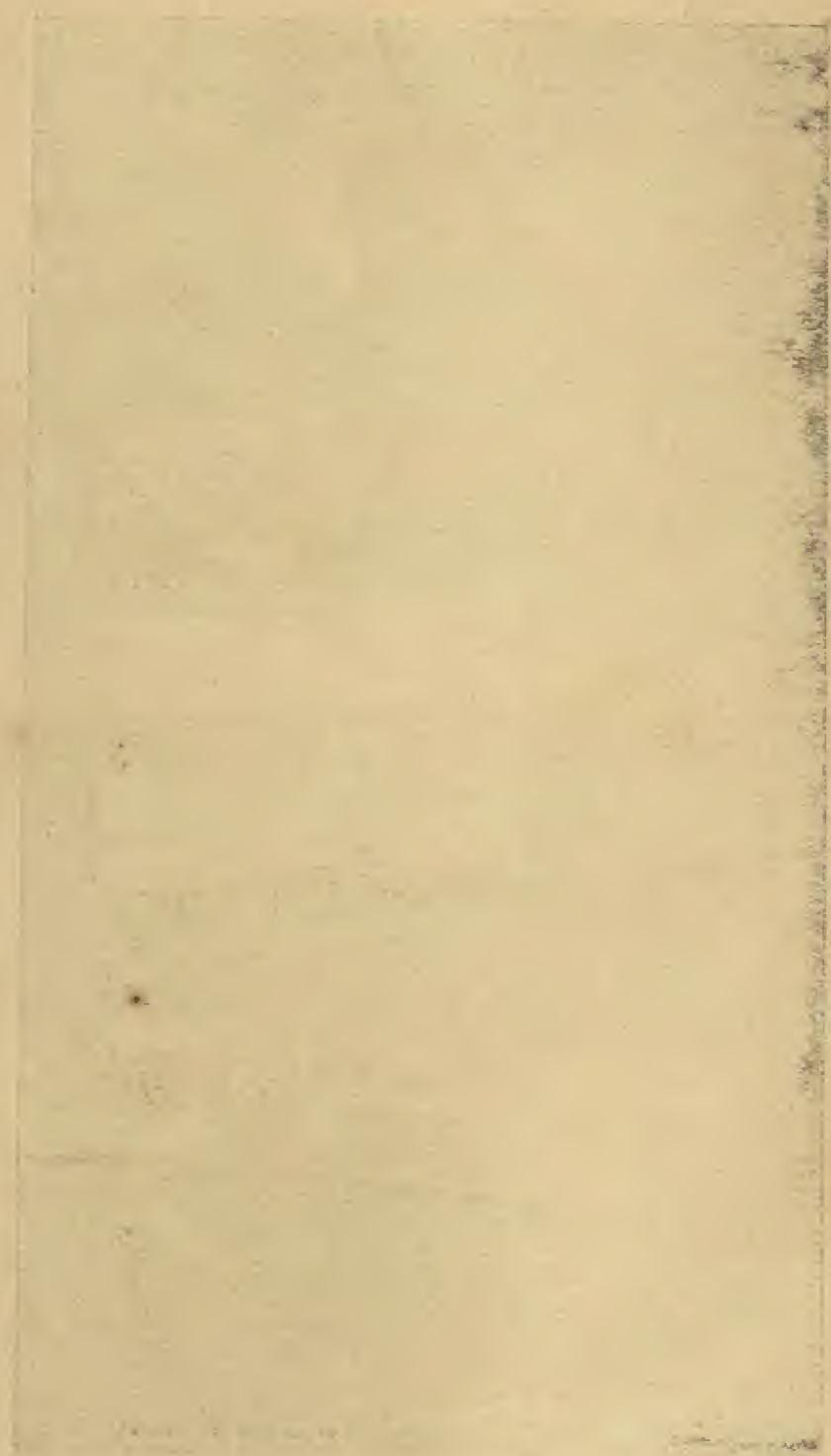
placed on a separate seat just to the right of the throne. The Maharaja Bahadur then offered flowers and sacred leaves to the throne and walked around it seven times in the company of Brahmins. He then bowed down before his family deity and took his seat on the throne. Thus seated on the throne His Highness took garland and *chandan* from the Suba Sahab and assumed the *Raj-Tika* (symbol of sovereignty) on his forehead. This was followed by recitations of Vedic hymns by pandits. The religious ceremony of the installation thus finished, His



His Highness The Maharaja Manikya Bahadur with his Councillors and officers of personal staff.

(Sitting) Manyabar J. C. Sen (Minister), Mahamanyabhar Prince N. C. Deb Burman, His Highness The Maharaja Manikya Bahadur, Mahamanyabhar Prince B. K. Deb Burman, Lt. Col Pulley (Chief Staff Officer).

(Standing from left) Capt Braj Lal Deb Burman, A. D. O to His Highness. Capt P. K. Deb Burman (Military Secy) Capt. Balindra Kishore Deb Burman (A. D. C.), Hon'ble Rana Bodh Jung Bahadur (Chief Secy.), Capt, Rana Jhopat Jung Bahadur (A. D. C) Capt Rana Nepal Jung Bahadur.



Highness bowed before the deity and then alighted from the dais and walked towards the gate, a procession being formed in the same order as before. His Highness then got upon the *Chaturdola* and was carried to the palace in procession.

Then followed a round of festivities which included among other things a public feast, illumination, music and amusements.

The day following the installation ceremony witnessed an imposing procession of 100 decorated elephants which surpassed all others in grandeur and picturesqueness. The procession consisted of princes, prominent members of the Raj family, distinguished guests, band parties, flag bearers, the state battalion and different groups of fantastically dressed hill tribes. As it slowly wended its way it was greeted by enthusiastic crowds singing glory to His Highness. Ladies from house-gates joined in the general chorus by their *Ulu*.



His Highness in Darbar

Najar Durbar was held the same day at 7 P. M. in the Durbar Hall. The members of the Raj family, zemindars, talukdars, State officials and all who attended the installation ceremony paid *Nazar* which consisted of gold mohurs, silver etc. to His Highness.



His Highness in Durbar.

A Durbar for the presentation of addresses to His Highness was held on the 1st February at 11 A. M. at the Durbar Hall of the Ujjayanta Palace when addresses were presented by the Tripura Hitasadhini Sabha, Tripura State Landholders' Association and the Talukdars' Association. Addresses were also presented by the Talukdars of Chakla Roshnabad, Tripura Tea Association and numerous other associations and public bodies. After the addresses were read His Highness gave a suitable joint reply.



His Highness The Maharaja Manikya Bahadur after installations in January 1928 (with guest).

After the presentation of addresses His Highness permitted his subjects belonging to the hill tribes to present their levies. These people in their peculiar dresses approached His Highness and presented innumerable articles including tiger's skin, rare hill fruits and shrubs, elephant tusk, birds etc. These presents were very much appreciated.

Another important function of the year was the marriage of Maharajkumari Bibhasprabha Devi, His Highness's second sister, with Jubaraj Subhag Singhji Bahadur, heir apparent of Baria State in Bombay Presidency which was celebrated with great eclat at Agartala on March 10, 1928. The bridegroom's father, His Highness Capt. Maharaol Shree Sir Ranjit Singhji Bahadur, K. C. S. I., Ruler of Baria, with His Highness Maharaja Saheb of Santrampur and two other Ruling Princes, with many distinguished guests of high rank attended the function. The alliance between two ancient Rajput families of eastern and western India has a significance and importance of its own.

First Official Visit To Comilla.

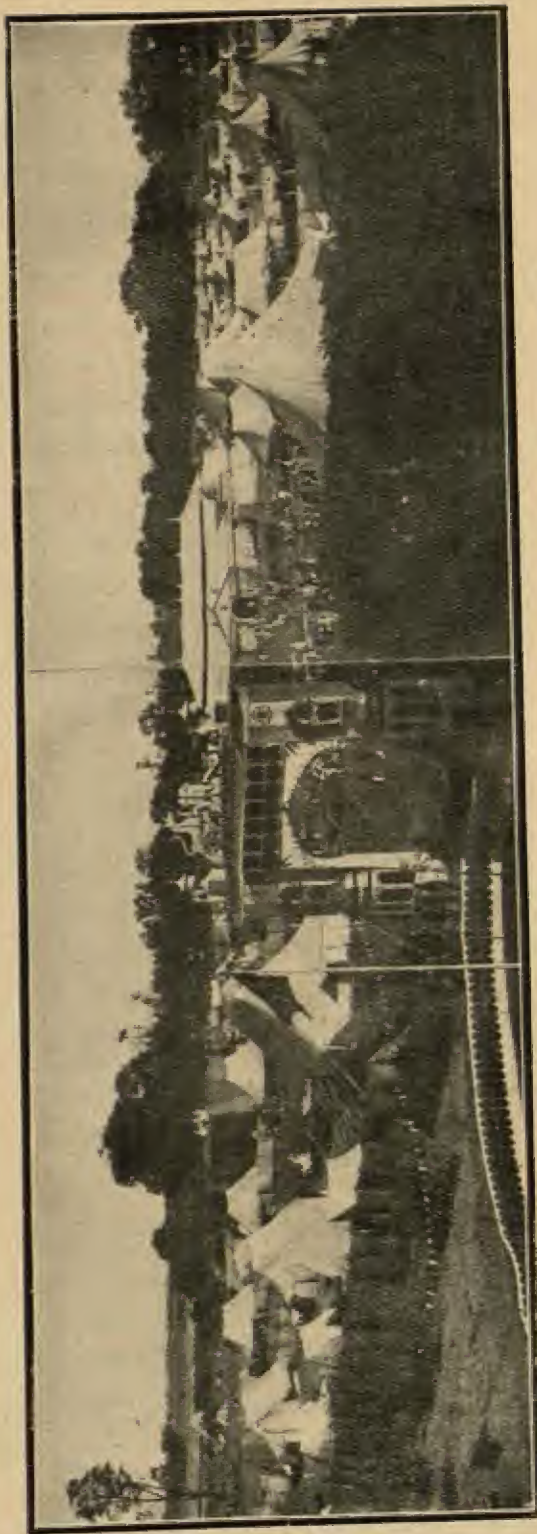
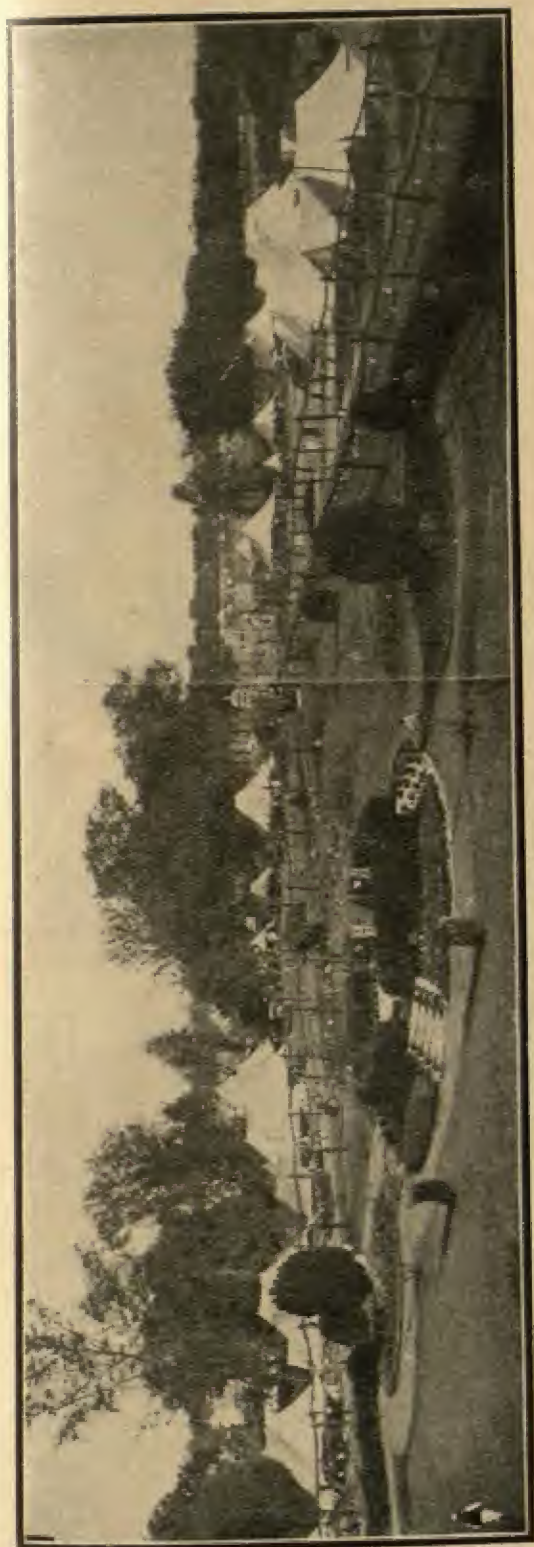
His Highness paid his first official visit, on August 18, 1928, to Comilla, the headquarters of British Tippera as well as of the Maharaja's vast Zemindaries. The welcome that His Highness received on the occasion from all sections of people, official and non-official, was indeed unprecedented in the annals of the town. His Highness was received at the station by Mr. H. W. Lyne, I. C. S., District Magistrate (Ex-officio Political Agent of the State) as well as by the members of a committee composed of the elite of the town representing all caste and creed. A guard of honour detailed under Government orders presented arms along with a band of Boy Scouts. An address of welcome was read on the platform to which His Highness gave a suitable reply. The vast gathering that attended and the enthusiasm displayed beggared description. It was with difficulty that His Highness' carriage could pass through the surging crowd struggling to have a *darshan* of His Highness, while as the procession

passed through the decorated streets and houses, ladies showered fired rice and flowers from house tops and balconies to the sound of conch shells and *ulu*.



His Highness the Maharaja Manikya Bahadur in the *Punyaha* Durbar at Comilla.

His Highness received addresses of welcome from the District Board, the Municipality, the People's Association, the Khadimul Islam, the Anjuman-i-Islamia, the Hindu Mahashabha, the Widow Marriage Society, the Traders' Association, the Chamber of Commerce, the Nurnagar Talukdars' Association and many other representative bodies, besides those from different sections of his tenants and officials. To all of these addresses His Highness gave sympathetic replies which raised great expectations in the mind of the people.



Birds-eye view of the Janwasa camp erected at Balarampur during the marriage ceremony of
H. H. the Maharaja Manikya Bahadur.

Visits to religious institutions, both Hindu and Mahomedan, as well as to colleges, schools and libraries followed amidst great public ovations, while His Highness made contributions for purposes of worship in the temples and mosques, and for the feeding of children.

A number of other public functions forming a part of the programme, including an address by the ladies, had to be abandoned to the great disappointment of all, owing to a sudden attack of influenza with which His Highness was unfortunately laid up.

The visit thus came to a sudden and almost dramatic end, following a State Banquet and a Garden party at His Highness' residence in which all sections of Comilla society were widely represented.

Before departure the Maharaja announced donations to public Institutions aggregating Rs. 63,000.

On recovery His Highness went to Mussoorie for a brief period of change and visited Simla, Delhi and Agra before return.

His Highness' Marriage.

Early in the year it was announced that the marriage of His Highness the Maharaja Manikya Bahadur had been settled with the sixth Maharaj Kumari Saheba of Balarampur—a daughter of the late Maharaja Sir Bhagabati Prasad Sing Bahadur, K. C. I. E., K. B. E., and sister of the present Maharaja Saheb.

This alliance between the historic House of Tripura and the premier Rajput Talukdar family of Oudh caused all round satisfaction. A deputation of *Sardars* representing the Maharaja of Balarampur soon arrived, and the *Tilak* or betrothal ceremony was performed with becoming eclat at the Ujjayanta Palace, Agartala, on the 20th May, 1928.

The marriage ceremony was celebrated at Balarampur on the 16th January, 1929, and proved in every way worthy of the

alliance, both in respect of the distinguished gathering that attended it, and the spectacular grandeur that the functions presented. His Excellency the Governor of the United Provinces graced the ceremony with his presence, while among the guests were a number of Ruling Chiefs, Maharajas, Rajas and other eminent men, both European and Indian.

His Highness, accompanied by a bridal party, which numbered about 1000, left Agartala on the 12th January, 1929, and received ovations not only at Agartala and all along the route to the Railway station, but from a huge concourse of people at Akhaura, as the bridal specials left. Similar ovations followed at Chandpur as the party boarded the special steamers, and at Goalundo, where it entrained again. It was arranged that the trains from Goalundo would proceed upto Calcutta and then start back for Balarampur via Naihati and Bandel. As the bridegroom's special steamed in with its precious load, a distinguished gathering on the gaily decorated platform of Sealdah Station accorded the Maharaja an enthusiastic welcome. Similar receptions at Benares and Lucknow followed, and at Benares in particular—the band in attendance, the sumptuous meals laid for members of the bridal party in tastefully decorated tents, and the crowd of holy priests vying with one another in their eagerness to offer blessings to His Highness, created an atmosphere of warmth and heartiness never to be forgotten.

At Balarampur the welcome accorded to His Highness by Maharaja Pateswari Prasad Sing Bahadur and his staff was all that could be desired, and the tender care and lavish hospitality meted out to each individual member of the party and to each individual guest were worthy of the best traditions of the house.

Congratulations poured in from all quarters and included kind messages of good will from His Excellency the Governor of Bengal, His Excellency the Governor of United Provinces, a number of Indian Princes and Chiefs as well as many other leading men. At a State Banquet held at Balarampur on the



Main gate of the Janwasa Camp erected at Balarampur during the marriage ceremony of H. H. the Maharaja Manikya Bahadur.



The Palace at the Janwasa camp where H. H. The Maharaja Manikya Bahadur stayed.

17th January, the Hon'ble Mr. A. W. Pim, C. S. I., C. I. E., I. C. S., Finance Member of the United Provinces, proposed in felicitous terms, the toast of the bride and the bridegroom, which was most enthusiastically responded to and His Highness gave a suitable reply.

His Highness returned to Agartala on the 23rd January, 1929 with Her Highness the Maharanee Saheba, who was accorded by high and low alike a most warm reception and the auspicious ceremony came to a close in the midst of rejoicings and festivities which lasted for full one week.

CHAPTER VII.

COUNCILS AND COMMITTEES.

After accession to the *Gadi* His Highness devoted himself in right earnest to allround improvement of the State, and from the many-sided activities initiated by him it became apparent that His Highness had not only keenly watched the work of the Administrative Councils but also acquired thorough knowledge of the minutest details of administration. It was soon perceived by all connected with the State that His Highness, though of tender age, was not only capable of managing all affairs with efficiency but was also able to devise various measures for the improvement of administration in all its branches. An early riser, an active worker and a disciplined soldier His Highness does not know what is lethargy or idleness. A dynamic personality, His Highness is ever full of activities and it is therefore easy for him to accomplish great things within a very short time. Possessed of great foresight His Highness felt that unless there is gradual decentralisation and

responsible officers of the State are allowed to actively participate in thrashing out policies and schemes in matters in which they have acquired experience the administration cannot run efficiently. With this conviction the Maharaja constituted several Councils and Committees each consisting of experienced members of the State. In this great work the help and co-operation of even outsiders were enlisted. To increase efficiency departments were separated as far as practicable and an Executive Council was constituted, each member being placed in charge of particular portfolios.

The most important innovations were the constitution of (1) *Mantrana Sabha* or the Advisory Council (2) *Byabasthapak Sabha* or the Legislative Council and (3) the *Mantri Parishath* or the Executive Council.

Mantrana Sabha.

(Advisory Council).

By a proclamation dated the 31st August 1927 His Highness constituted the Advisory Council the personnel of which has already been referred to. As the name suggests the Advisory Council was appointed to advise the Maharaja in important affairs of the State. The Council generally meets twice a month but the Chief Secretary is empowered to convene special meetings whenever necessary. Matters on which His Highness requires advice and counsel are ordinarily placed before the Council. His Highness also invests the Council with temporary and sometimes with permanent powers to deal with and discuss certain matters and give final decisions on the same. In its final decision the Council may approve or reject a proposal without further reference to the Maharaja Manikya Bahadur.

The Council as at present constituted have thus the following powers :—

- (a) To hear appeals from officers of the State Civil Service who are departmentally punished either by the Chief Secretary or the Chief Officer.
- (b) To consider proposals regarding Permanent or *Taskhichi* Settlement of property in the State or in the Zemindaries as well as *Izara* of Mohals with minimum annual income of Rs. 5000/-.
- (c) To consider suggestions regarding initiation of new legislation, passing of new Bills, new Acts and Amendments to the existing Acts
- (d) To scrutinise the budgets of the State as well as of the Zemindaries.
- (e) To discuss such other matters as concern the general welfare of the State and the Zemindaries.

Byabasthapak Sabha

(Legislative Council).

Byabasthapak Sabha or the Legislative Council was constituted by another proclamation on the 3rd September, 1927. His Highness the Maharaja Manikya Bahadur is the President of the Council while Prince Nabadwip Chandra Deb Barman and Prince Brajendra Kishore Deb Barman were appointed Vice-Presidents and Mr. Kamala Prasad Dutt Secretary. Besides the ex-officio members, the Council counts several high officers of the State and non-officials as members. The Council has lately co-opted a few gentlemen from outside the State to have the benefit of their expert opinion on different subjects and particularly advice on the nature of legislation that should be introduced for successfully working out the various improvement schemes formulated by His Highness.

The function of the Council is to consider or approve or reject Bills drafted by the Executive Department and forward their final decision to His Highness for approval.

Mantri Parishath.*(Executive Council).*

On the 17th May, 1929, by another proclamation His Highness constituted a third Council the *Mantri Parishath* or the Executive Council with Maha-Manyabar Prince Nabadwip



Maha-Manyabar Prince Brajendra Kishore Deb Barman.

Chandra Deb Barman as President, Maha-Manyabar Prince Brojendra Kishore Dev Barman as Vice-President and Dewan Bahadur Bejoy Kumar Sen, Dewan Administration and Manager Chakla Roshnabad, Manyabar Rana Bodh Jung Bahadur, Chief Secretary and Dewan Sahab Kamala Prasad Dutt—Private Secretary as members.

This Council has been constituted with the object of rendering help and co-operation to His Highness in the execu-

tion of all matters concerning the welfare of the State and the Zemindaries except only in respect of His Highness' Privy Purse. And therefore with the exception of the President and Vice-president other three members have been entrusted with Portfolios as follows :—



Dewan Bahadur B. K. Sen.
Dewan-Administration.

Dewan Bahadur B. K.
Sen : —

- (a) Matters Political and relating to appointments.
- (b) Executive and Judicial Departments.
- (c) Police.
- (d) Revenue and General Departments.
- (e) Forest.
- (f) Public works.
- (g) Accounts and Audit.
- (h) Stamps and Treasury.
- (i) Jail.
- (j) Education.
- (k) Medical Department.
- (l) Sanitation.
- (m) Municipality.
- (n) Press and Printing.
- (o) Guest House, Mahafej-khana and Stationery.
- (p) Power House and Electric Supply.
- (q) All matters which are under Dewan Administration, Chakla Roshnabad and other Zemindaries.

Manyabar Rana Bodh Jung Bahadur :—

- (a) Palace, Sultanate and Motor Vehicles.
- (b) Immigration and Reclamation.



Manyabar Rana Sahib Bodh Jung Bahadur.
Chief Secretary.

The Executive Council meets ordinarily twice a month on the 1st and the 3rd Mondays except on State holidays. The members may if they so like convene extraordinary meetings to place any matter before the council and extraordinary meetings are also held if there is pressure of work.

- (c) Industry and Commerce.
- (d) Executive Council and Advisory Council.
- (e) Chief Secretary's Office.
- (f) Publicity.

Dewan Saheb Kamala Prasad Dutt :—

- (a) Household and Worship of the State Deities.
- (b) Military.
- (c) *Rajmala* Re-editing Department.
- (d) Private Secretary's Office.



Dewan Saheb Kamala Prasad Dutt.
Private Secretary.

Retrenchment Committee.

To commandeer all available resources for improvement of the State His Highness' one of the first important step was the appointment of a Retrenchment Committee with Dewan Saheb Kamala Prasad Dutt M. A. B. L. and Thakur Saheb Kamini Kumar Singh, Senior—most Divisional Officer as members. The Committee was asked to enquire into the various financial resources of the State, to suggest curtailment of expenditure where that could be done consistent with efficiency and to stop wasteful expenditure, if in its opinion there was any. The Committee held several sittings and submitted their report in due course. The report is receiving the attention of His Highness.

Improvement Committee.

His Highness next appointed a State Improvement Committee consisting of following members :—

Dewan B. K. Sen Bahadur—Dewan—Administration, Manyabar Rana Saheb Bodh Jung Bahadur—Chief Secretary, Dewan Saheb K. P. Dutt—Private Secretary, Dr. M. M. Majumdar—State Physician, Mr. S. C. Deb Barman—Senior Nayeb Dewan, Thakor Saheb K. K. Singh—Naib Dewan, Lt, J. N. Bhaduri—State Engineer and Mr. P. R. Bhattacharjee—Deputy Manager, Chakla Roshnabad.

The Committee started work immediately and after an elaborate examination of various matters concerning the welfare of the State formulated a scheme which will involve an expenditure of Rs. 52,00,000/-, to be spent over a period of 19 years.

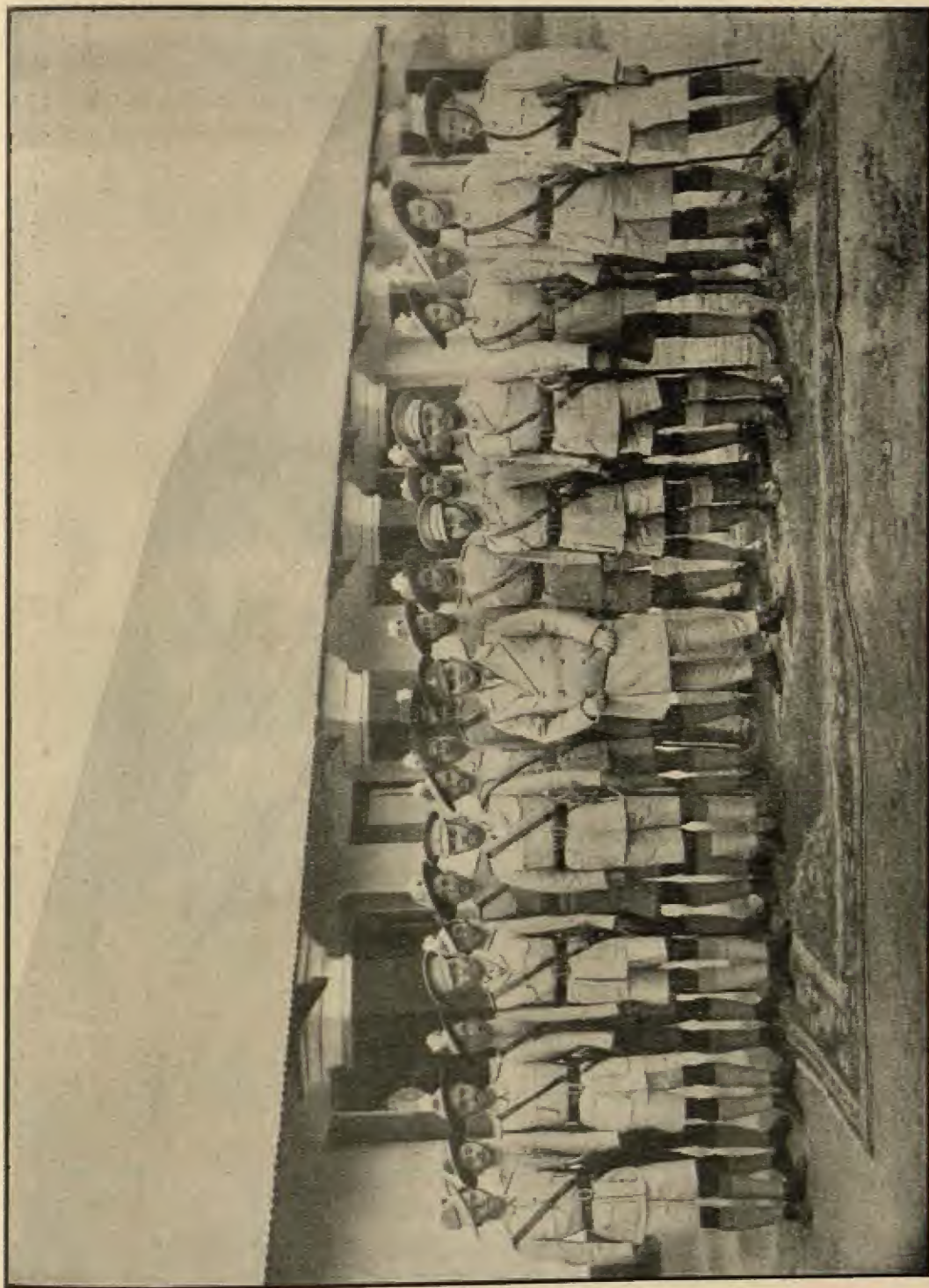
The different items of expenditure are as follows :—

1. Railways	...	...	Rs. 13,00,000
2. Water Supply	...	...	" 75,000
3. State Bank Shares	...	...	" 3,00,000

4. Officers Quarters	...	...	Rs, 1,60,000
5. Kumars' Quarters	...	...	" 2,20,000
6. Cantonment	...	...	" 3,00,000
7. New Palace	...	...	" 13,00,000
8. Roads	...	...	" 12,45,000
9. Electric Supply	...	...	" 35,000
10. Other Improvements	...	...	" 2,65,000

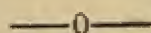
Tea Enquiry Committee.

The Tea Enquiry Committee was another important committee that His Highness appointed with 3 officials and 2 representatives of the Tripura Tea Association. This Committee is enquiring into the financial condition of the tea concerns and difficulties if any experienced by them in dealing with the State representatives or in the matter of exporting goods. The Committee was advised to devise and suggest means for the uninterrupted development of the industry. The Committee have not yet finished its labours. As His Highness is anxious to render all possible help to the tea concerns as one of the growing and prosperous industries, it is expected that the industry will further thrive with State help.



His Highness The Maharaja Manikya Bahadur with the military officers before starting for Europe in 1930.

MANY-SIDED ACTIVITIES.



Military Reform.

A trained soldier His Highness directed his attention towards

after assumption of control re-organising the State army. He took prompt steps to attract young men of merit and ability to the State Military Service. He sent Lt. Prince B. L. Deb Barman, Lt. Rana Jhapat Jung Bahadur and Lt. Prince Balindra Kishore Deb Barman Bahadur to 1/8th Gurkha Rifles at Shillong. They were followed by another batch of officers and men and on their return the Maharaja appointed them to positions of responsibility. These steps gave a great impetus to State military activities. A graded Service was introduced with bright future prospects and the military



Major Prince Dina Mohan Deb Barman.
Commandant of the Army.

barracks were removed to a hillock near the *Kunjaban* garden palace where an up-to-date cantonment was built. An early riser, Maharaja rises from bed every morning at the first cock-crow and is seen riding towards the cantonment where he takes the salute from his soldiers. After the usual parade

held every morning under his personal supervision the Maharaja himself engages the men either in jungle-cutting, road-making



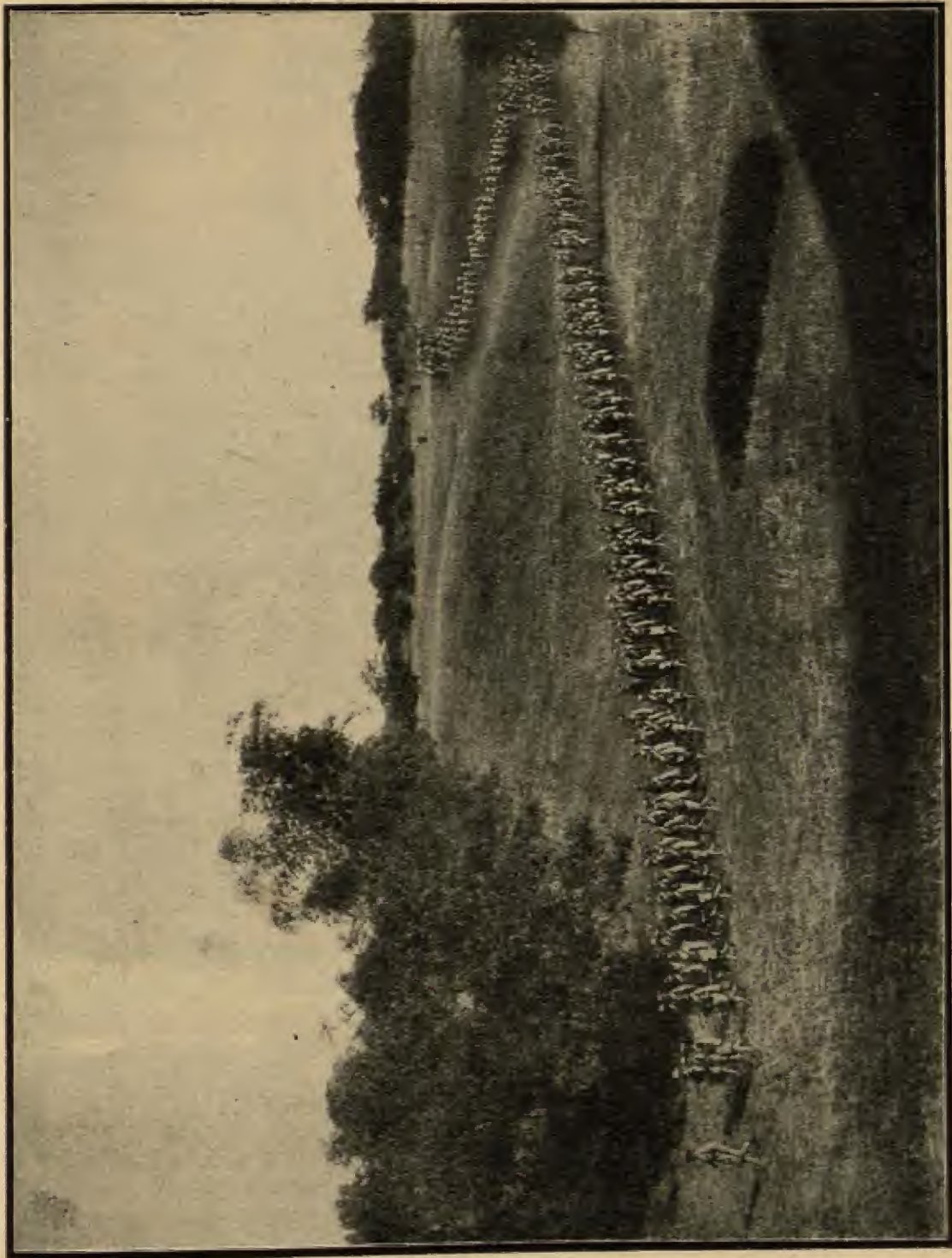
Capt. Prince Prafulla Kumar
Deb Barman.
Military Secretary.

canal-digging and various other pioneering works or personally demonstrates to them the processes of sowing, reaping and transplantation in the cantonment gardens.

As a result of the personal care and keen interest taken by His Highness the Military Department of the State has made great progress within a very short time not only as regards smartness and efficiency of the units but also in physique and moral tone of every individual soldier.

Education and Public Instruction.

Education also received its due share of attention. With the strong conviction that every material and moral improvement hinges on widespread education His Highness took early measures to make State education as broad-based and comprehensive as possible. He sent his step brothers Prince Karna Kishore and Prince Durjoy Kishore to the Rajkumar College in C. P. and some other members of the Raj family to Comilla Rajkumar Boarding for education and training. Under his instructions the tutorial staff of the five High English Schools and of the Middle English and Primary Schools was strengthened. Though an earnest advocate of Western education, Eastern culture did not escape His Highness' attention. Tols, Maktabas and Madrasahs received increased grants and showed great activities. With a view to encouraging learning His Highness also introduced



March of Tripura Soldiers.



numerous scholarships, stipends and prizes and initiated measures for recruitment of members of the Civil Service



Umakanta Academy at Agartala.

from State scholars. This demonstrated that only merit and education would now be regarded as passports for offices of distinction and responsibility. Five graduates from State subjects were recruited on probation for the State Civil Service who after the necessary training and examinations would be permanently enlisted in a graded scale of salaries. These steps were greatly appreciated and raised high aspirations in the minds of youngmen of the State.

Public Works.

The beautification of the capital and general improvement of its sanitation formed an integral part of the general improvement scheme and followed as a matter of course. The Public Works Department soon showed great activities in the carrying

out of several new schemes sanctioned by the Maharaja. Works were soon undertaken for—

- (a) Extension of the area of the Capital town of Agartala.
- (b) Improvement of roads of the town by widening and straightening them.
- (c) Erection of new public buildings in the town.
- (d) Improvement of water supply and town lighting.
- (e) Construction of two very important new roads connecting the capital with the subdivisions and improvement of communication in the interior by a net work of new roads.
- (f) Improvement and clearing of the water ways within the State territory.
- (g) Improvement of traffic by opening motor services.
- (h) Laying out of a separate cantonment station.



Ujjayanta Palace, Agartala,

To the execution of the works His Highness always devoted personal attention and offered valuable suggestions. He was found almost daily paying a visit to the new works and discussing matters with the departmental heads. As a result of these improvements Agartala was very soon transformed into a beautiful modern town with stately buildings and beautiful roads interspersed with lawns, parks and well-laid gardens.



Maharani Tulshibati Girls' School at Agartala.



School girls being taken to Schools in motor bus.



Industry & Commerce.

His Highness separated from General Administration the department of Industry and Commerce to increase its efficiency. The Chief Secretary under whose personal supervision the department was placed immediately started work to reorganise the weaving Industry of Tripura, Manipuri and different Hill tribes, the Cane and Bamboo Industry, manufacture of Molasses and other cottage industries. He also devised various means for the development of cotton, kapok, oil seeds, tobacco and export of other products. A show room with samples of multifarious State products has been opened at the Office of the Department from where all information industrial and commercial is made available to all.

For the purpose of extensive propaganda and to popularise the State products among Indians the Industrial Department in collaboration with the State Agricultural Department opened a Stall in the Calcutta Congress Exhibition of 1928, in charge of the Agricultural Officer of the State. The specimens of different kinds of home industries and Tripura products attracted thousands of visitors daily and numerous enquiries followed from various quarters indicating that there is ample room for the expansion of the trade of the State. And as a consequence of this demand the departments are devoting special attention to the production of certain particular species of cottage industries on an extensive scale. As the future of the State industry is very bright His Highness has encouraged the Department by approving their proposal regarding the appointment of a Trade Agent in Calcutta who will be furnished with samples, rates and information about State products and will also study the market and send to the State department samples of other products which might be produced within the State with advantage and profit. These measures have given a great impetus to the industrial activities of the State.

Agricultural Department.

The Agricultural Department which was re-organised at the instance of His Highness have taken up the following works :—

- (1) Introduction of better quality of Cotton in *Jooms* in the hills as also in the plains.
- (2) Introduction of superior quality of Paddy in *Jooms* as well as improved varieties of *Aman* in the plains.
- (3) Extension of cultivation of superior quality of jute, tobacco, sugar-cane and potato crops both in the highlands and river valleys.
- (4) Preservation of manure and use of selected seeds.
- (5) Circuit lectures against nomadic *Jooming* and in favour of plough cultivation.

The department have opened an Enquiry Office in a specially constructed shed right in heart of the Agartala Bazar to furnish people with all information regarding Agricultural operation, seeds, appliances, plants and cattle diseases. This office also keeps a regular stock of different varieties of seeds and manures. The Department is thus rendering valuable help to cultivators. On market days His Highness while passing by the Enquiry Office is some times found to watch the work with keen interest.

Immigration and Reclamation.

In order to develop the vast tracts of wild land and to populate them His Highness opened a new Department called the Immigration and Reclamation Department and placed the same under the charge of the Chief Secretary Manyabar Rana Bodh Jung Bahadur. Soon after the opening of this department vigorous attempts have been made for the



Tripura State Stall at the Calcutta Congress Exhibition, 1928.



study of material and sanitary conditions of various tracts of land awaiting development. The Chief Secretary with other responsible officers made extensive tours and after careful consideration of all matters formulated various schemes which received the approval and sanction of His Highness and work was taken up immediately. Reclamation work has thus commenced in Kulai Haor, Dhalai Valley of Kailasahar Subdivision and various other places where jungle-cutting, road-making, canalisation and other preliminary works are now in progress. It is expected that nearly 400 square miles of land will be thus reclaimed and distributed amongst the immigrants.

State Bank.

His Highness convinced as he was that without proper and timely financing no industry or trade can prosper asked his councillors to formulate a scheme for starting a State Bank. The matter was consequently placed before the Legislative Council and discussed in several meetings. Mr. I. B. Dutt, Managing Director of Comilla Union Bank Ltd. and Mr. N. Dutt, Organiser of Comilla Banking corporation Ltd. were co-opted as members of the Legislative Council to help the State authorities with their expert knowledge in Banking. A Sub-Committee designated as the State Bank Committee was formed. The Committee after a thorough enquiry formulated a scheme which was placed before the Council. The scheme has been approved by the Council and the State Bank is now in the process of formation.

Water Works.

At the instance of the Maharaja a scheme was chalked out for the construction of a water works at Agartala. The State Executive Department requested the Public Health Department of the Government of Bengal to advise them in the matter.

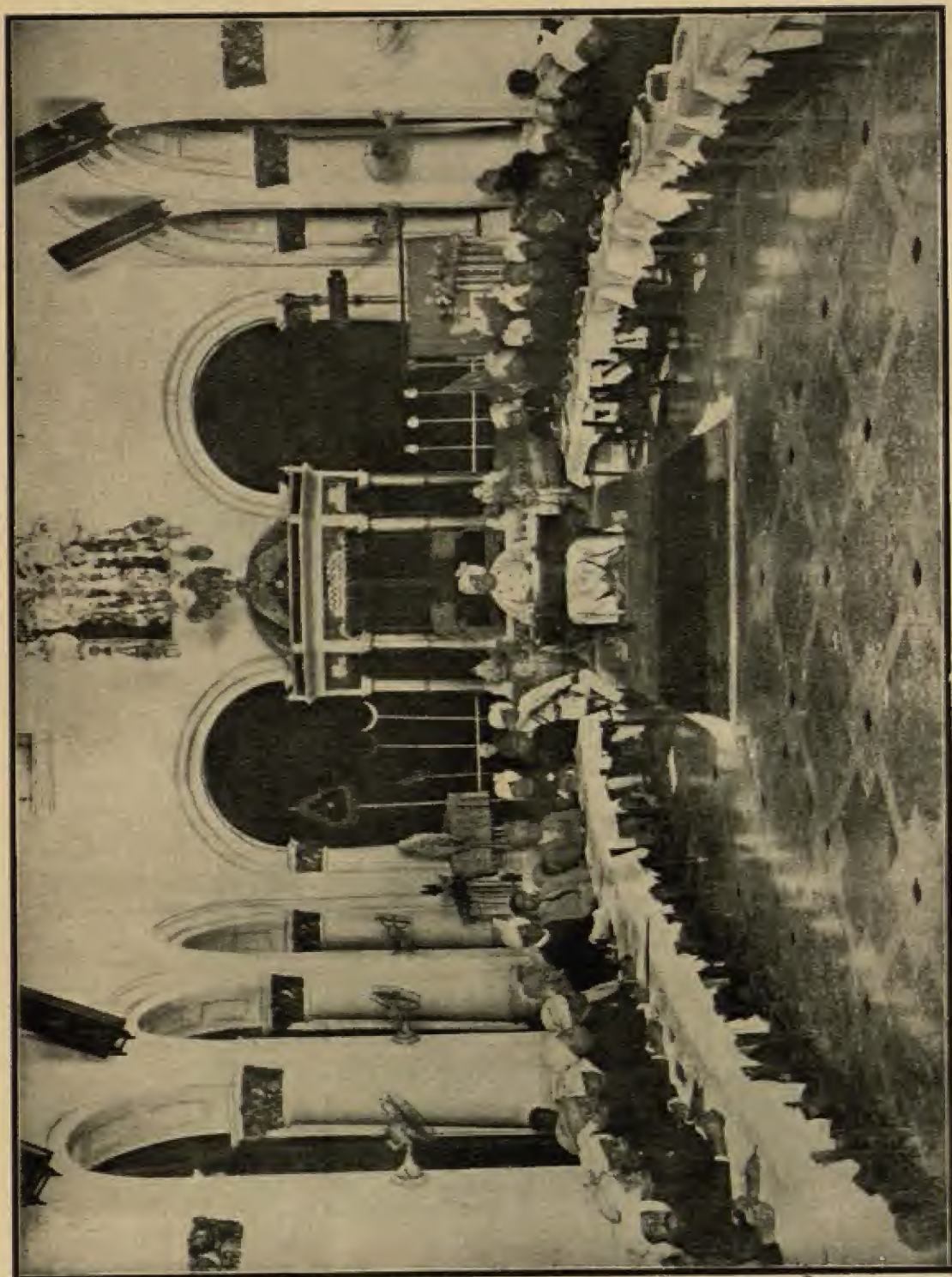
The Engineer with the permission of Government went to Agartala and after inspecting the town and a thorough study of the local conditions drew up a Water Works Scheme with suggestions for drainage of the town. The schemes are now under consideration of the Executive Council.

Railway

There is no Railway within the State territory except a few miles of Feni-Bilonia Branch line of the A. B. Railway. Akhaura Junction, a most important Station of the same Railway, is nearly 6 miles from the State capital. Hence difficulty is experienced in exporting the State products especially the forest produce. His Highness therefore sanctioned a scheme for the construction of a light Railway within the State and requested Messrs Martin and Co. to take up the work. They have begun work after necessary Survey operations. Agartala will thus be shortly connected with Akhaura Junction and with Bishalgarh Bazar as well as Birendranagar via Ranir Bazar. And when this line will be completed it will lead to rapid industrial progress of the State, connect as it would the principal trade arteries of the State with the outside world.

Social Reform.

Brought up in an atmosphere of culture and progressive ideas, His Highness manifested tendencies towards social reform from his very childhood. His Highness openly disapproved the activities of some of the orthodox people who for a time tried to create party factions over social customs and manners. Soon after his accession he had to work for the removal of some of the evil customs which prevailed among the hill tribes and interfered with their healthy growth. For the unification of the State Kshatriya Communities and regulation of their social manners and customs His Highness held durbars with the



His Highness Maharaja Bir Bikram Kishore Manikya Bahadur with the officers of the State
after the Officers Conference in December, 1929.

leaders of the various groups of Kshatriyas. But in all such matters he is following a very cautious policy of progress mixed with toleration. His aim is to spread education among the masses and thus break the barriers that keeps one sect away from another.

Excursions and Tours.

Possessed of indomitable energy His Highness even before his accession used to take excursion tours in the



His Highness The Maharaja Manikya Bahadur on Bara Mura hills during the exploration tour.

remotest parts of the State and in course of these sojourns visited some of the tea gardens started during his father's regime. His Highness utilised these tours to the fullest extent in acquiring first hand information. He also visited different places after assuming control. One of the most important excursions undertaken just prior to his departure for Europe was for tracing the source of *Howra* river which rising from the Bura Mura hills and gliding by the old as well as the new capital empties itself into the *Titash* river near Gangasagar Station on the A. B. Railway. This led to the discovery of a waterfall at the base of the river. Soon after this visit measures were adopted for clearing the waterways within the State and thereby improving river traffic. His Highness visited Delhi, Agra, Lucknow, Cownpur, Mussoorie, Nainital and a few Indian States including Kashmere. He also made a short trip to Rangoon where the Bengali residents gave him a befitting reception. But these were not mere pleasure trips. These tours furnished him with many ideas as regards town-planning and various other matters concerning the improvement of the State.

State Officers Conference.

In November 1929, just a month before his departure for Europe His Highness took the novel step of holding a conference of State officials. The Conference was attended by all responsible officers of the State as well as of the Zeminderies. Some of the retired officers of the State were also invited to take part in the deliberations. Proceedings were *en camera*, visitors and press representatives being entirely excluded. The Conference met daily from 11 A. M. to 5 P. M. for more than a week. The officers were allowed to give their frank opinion on matters under discussion and connected State papers and reports were made available to them. The discussions mainly centred round matters concerning efficient administration and particularly on difficulties experienced by the officials in the discharge of their duties and how these difficulties could be eliminated. The



His Highness The Maharaja Manikya Bahadur with party on the top of Baramura hills.



Source of the Howra river in the Bara-mura hills explored by His Highness the Maharaja Manikya Bahadur in 1929.

Conference was a great success and ended by passing resolutions ensuring all round reforms in State business procedure.

State Council.

For proper management of State affairs during his absence on European tour His Highness extended the powers of the Advisory Council so that all emergencies could be met without his personal guidance. In its present form the Advisory Council



Maha-Manyabar Prince Nabadwip Chandra Deb Barman
President, Council of State.

is designated as the State Council operating with Maha-Manyabar Prince Nabadwip Chandra Deb Barman as President and Maha-Manyabar Prince Brajendra Kishore Deb Barman as Vice-President.

European Tour.

An unquenchable thirst for knowledge impelled His Highness to undertake a European tour. His Highness is the



Uzir Bahadur Braja Krishna
Deb Barman.
Member, Council of State.

first among the long line of Princes of this historic house to break through the tyranny of orthodox social barrier and take what is regarded as an extremely bold step. His Highness left Agartala amidst the good wishes of his people, all public bodies and representative associations having presented addresses wishing him Godspeed. His Highness was accompanied by the Chief Staff Officer Col. O. C. Pully, Chief Secretary Manyabar Rana Sahib Bodh Jung Bahadur, A. D. C. Captain Prince Balindra Kishore Deb Barman, Captain Prince Brajalal Deb Barman,

Captain Rana Sahib Nepal Jung Bahadur and family physician Dr. Promode Chandra Deb. His Highness stayed for a few days in Calcutta prior to his sailing. The occasion was utilised by the Tippera Hitasadhini Sabha to accord His Highness a farewell reception. The function which was held in the premises of Mr. A. C. Sen, President of the Sabha, was a great success being largely attended by distinguished guests and almost all the people of Tippera residing in Calcutta. His Highness was presented with an address wishing him a pleasant voyage. His Highness



His Highness Maharaja Bir Bikram Kishore Manikya Bahadur with the officers of the State
after the Officers Conference in December, 1929.

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His Highness Maharaja Bir Bikram Kishore Manikya Bahadur before starting
for Europe in January, 1930.

left Calcutta on January 26 and sailed from Bombay on the 2nd February, 1930. During his short stay in Bombay the Bengali residents met him at their club and presented him with an address. His Excellency the Governor of Bombay also invited him twice.



Capt. Prince Balindra Kishore Deb
Barman A. D. C to His Highness.

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THE MAHARAJA IN DAILY LIFE.

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It is an equally interesting study to observe His Highness as he lives his life from day to day. An indefatigable worker, His Highness never passes a single moment uselessly. His Highness is an early riser in the truest sense of the term. Rising from bed very early His Highness rides to the Cantonment every morning and supervises the military parade. Returning at about 9-30 A. M. His Highness takes a hurried bath and a simple breakfast and attends the daily durbar punctually at 11 A.M. where heaps of papers with numerous complicated matters await his decision. He never passes any paper with superficial observation but would with his usual smiling face go through the minutest details and give his officials the benefit of his advice and personal views. His deep insight into all matters and thorough mastery of facts and figures extort the admiration

of all who have seen him at work. After a prolonged daily durbar lasting for 5 or 6 hours he goes to take his afternoon tea with the officers of his personal staff. It is a short half an hour or so but always enlivened by witty and humorous conversations which serve as a natural relaxation after the day's hard work.



Capt. Prince Brajalal Deb Barman
A. D. C. to His Highness.

His Highness then takes a very slow drive through the principal streets of the town and of suburbs. Endowed with a keen power of observation he employs even this daily evening drive to useful purposes. Sometimes he would get down and inspect some new road or building under construction and make intelligent enquiries and sometimes would call the State Engineer or other departmental heads the next morning and discuss with them things that came to his notice the previous evening. On his

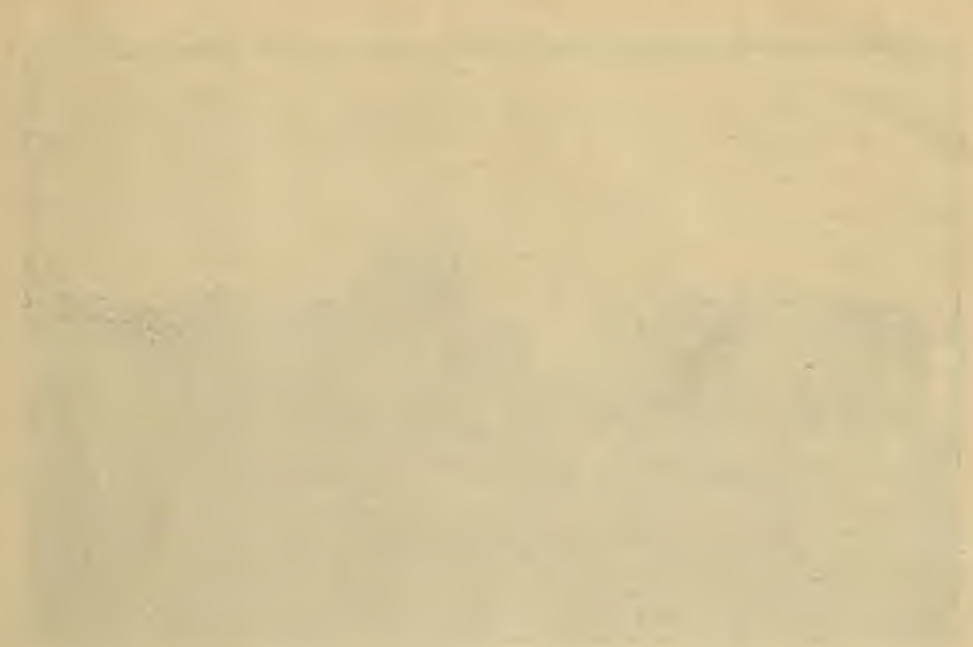
return from the evening drive His Highness is generally found employed in literary pursuits. Like some of his renowned predecessors he has developed a special aptitude for literature. He wields a fascile pen and is equally efficient as a writer of prose and poetry. He also possesses great dramatic talents. His historical drama "Joyabati" was very successfully staged at Agartala and evoked universal admiration. Some of his prose writings as also his compositions in poetry and music may find a suitable place in the domain of Bengali literature, but like his great grand father Maharaja Bir Chandra Manikya his compositions, though a few of them have been printed, are confined to the members of the Raj family and to some privileged people of the State.



Newly constructed *Dharamshala* at Agartala,



Guest house at Agartala.



A litterateur himself, His Highness naturally takes keen interest in the re-editing of the *Rajamala* and its research department. He has therefore separated the *Rajamala* re-editing Department from the General Administration and has placed it under the charge of his Private Secretary. He also takes a good deal of interest in the publication of "Ravi" an illustrated quarterly journal and "Jagaran" a monthly, both published from the State Capital. His Highness also encourages other papers and journals of Tripura and affords all possible facilities to them.

Unlike many ruling Chiefs of India he attends to all personal letters carefully and gives prompt replies to each and every letter. A regular register is therefore kept at his personal office of all letters, applications and appeals and steps taken thereon. All personal letters of His Highness as soon as they reach Agartala Post Office are packed in a separate bag by the Post Master himself who keeps a duplicate key and are sent to His Highness who opens the bag himself.

Always solicitous of the welfare of his subjects His Highness is easily accessible to all irrespective of status and position. With a heart full of the milk of human kindness he is deeply touched to hear any tale of misery and is ever anxious to help people in difficulties. He is very kind to old State officers and have re-instated many of those who lost their services during previous regimes and has provided others with maintenance allowances for their life time.

His Highness is very social, polite and courteous to all. He is a good speaker and an impressive conversationalist.



Capt. Rana Nepal Jung Bahadur
A. D. C to His Highness.

Possessed of a calm and sweet temperament he never loses temper even when discussing very serious and complicated matters with State officials. He is never rude even to his menials. His is a magnetic personality. No visitor has ever returned from him dissatisfied though his prayer may not be granted. Every one that comes into contact with him is made to feel that the Maharaja is more anxious to help him than any body else.



CHAPTER VIII.

A Peep Into a glorious Chapter of Past History

All ancient kingdoms were primarily military States. They maintained their existence on military achievements and gloried in battles and conquests. It is, therefore, an interesting study how one single line of rulers has kept intact the independence of Tripura State for more than 5000 years. During this long period India has passed through many vicissitudes. Many a kingdom has sprung up and vanished—kingdoms whose heroic sons had carried the banner of conquest, both military and intellectual, even to the shores of Europe. How during these tempestuous days of rise and fall of nations, the Tripura State lying in the far eastern corner of India, has kept her peculiar traits intact even up to the present time reads like a romance. A study of the history of ancient Tripura at once reveals that at the root of all her glorious achievements lies her military strength. "Valour is the only essential thing"—had been the motto of Tripura kings from pre-historic days. They have not only had this motto engraved on the Royal seal, but whenever occasion arose, they carried their motto into practice. Every page of the *Rajamala* and *Rajratnakar* is full of incidents testifying to the martial prowess of the kings of ancient Tripura.

From historical records it is very difficult to find out the numerical strength of the ancient Tripura army. From the *Rajamala* it would appear that every male person had to go under military discipline and had to attend the Royal Palace clad in arms whenever the occasion was signalled by beat of drums. Similarly, when a neighbouring kingdom was conquered, its male inhabitants were also enlisted in the army. The Tripura army consisted of every able-bodied youngman. The numerical strength of the army, therefore, varied according as the boundaries of the kingdom expanded or diminished.

Dakshmin, the 48th lineal descendant of Druhu, collected as many as 50,000 soldiers. He made ten divisions of them and placed each of his ten brothers in command of 5000. It is moreover narrated that king Dakshmin had, in addition, under his command many *Kirat* soldiers. That the army of the Tripura kingdom was a huge one would appear from the fact that the queen of king Chhengthum Fa met and defeated three lakhs of soldiers sent by the king of Gour. The Army Department was organised during the reign of king Bijaya Manikya. It is narrated in *Rajamala* that an expedition consisting of 5000 boats, 26,000 infantry, 1000 cavalry, artillery and archers was sent against Bengal by King Bijay Manikya. Every boat of his navy had five archers. Abul Fazl, the historian of the *Ain-i-Akbari* writes :—

“Adjacent to the province of Bhati, there is an independent kingdom. It is called Tripura. The name of its king is Bijaya Manikya. This king has two lakhs of infantry and one thousand elephants.”

Rev. J. Long writes about this expedition :—“At this time Vijaya Raja of Tripura marched to Bengal with an army composed of 26,000 infantry and 3000 horses, besides artillery. He went by 5000 boats along the streams of Brahmaputra and Lakhi to the Padma.”

Tripura Raj genealogical table has it that Bijaya Manikya organised a mercenary infantry of 10,000 Pathans and had also under his command 1000 elephants. This goes to show that he was in no way inferior to the King of Bengal in military strength.

The System of Conscription

The vast Tripura army used to go to the battle field equipped with a variety of arms and means of transportation. In olden times, the bow and the arrow, the sword and the shield were used against the enemy in battle. The *Rajamala*

contains accounts of the use of guns and cannons, besides many other indigenous implements of war including pointed and poisoned bamboo poles. Different detachments of the army used different kinds of arms and implements. Conscription prevailed in Tripura so that every able-bodied youngman was an enrolled soldier. They would be commanded by their chiefs of the hill tracts and every subject had to obey their command in the matter of war. Successful commanders were honoured with titles. Soldiers selected from the hill tribes would be encamped in the barracks of the capital where regular military training was given. The commanders of these hill-tribe soldiers were known as *Nazirs* whose post was a coveted one to which none but the faithful relatives of kings would be appointed. This detachment of soldiers was known as *Binanda*. *Binanda* soldiers still exist, now doing duties similar to those of the Police. The Commander-in-chief was entitled *Narayan*. This title existed for many days and even Abul Fazal makes mention of it.

Peculiar as it may seem, a defeated general used to be given a spinning-wheel as his punishment. Spinning with a wheel being the leisurely work of women, a gift of it to a military man meant great dishonour to him. When the Pathan General Mobarak Khan conquered Chittagong and when the Tripura army was unable to take the Town back even after eight months of war, King Bijaya Manikya recalled his Generals and dismissed them with the gift of a spinning wheel to each and sent new Generals to Chittagong to fight the war afresh.

In olden days the Commander-in-chief was, after the king, the most noble person of the realm and exercised considerable influence over the government of the kingdom. As the Military and the Executive Departments were directly under them they used to use their position to exercise influence over the king himself and often to oust him. Many such attempts were made and some attempts were even successful. King Bijaya Manikya, however, curtailed the power of his

Generals and placed the government of the kingdom at the hands of *Uzirs* a newly created distinction. Military men thus lost their power.

Forts and Barracks.

The kingdom of Tripura had many forts and barracks, the remains of some of which exist even today. The greater part of East Bengal was at one time included in the kingdom of Tripura. Meherkul, Chandigarh, Gambhari or Gamariagarh, Sangraishgarh are some of the forts that may be specially mentioned. Besides these, there were many barracks away from the capital. Many subjects of the king who enrolled themselves as volunteers would not stay in forts or barracks but would live in their own homes to appear and attend in time of need thus swelling the number of the army.

The kings of ancient Tripura did not depend solely on their military chiefs in matters of war but when occasion arose would themselves accompany them to the battle field to engage in actual war. They waged not only wars of defence but would also send expeditions to attack the neighbouring kings. Such expeditions were led by the kings themselves and when any province was conquered, the Royal banner of Tripura was hoisted there and a Viceroy left behind to rule the province.

CHAPTER IX.

A dream of the future.

With the assumption of control of the external defence by the Paramount Power the necessity for costly military expeditions and equipments has gradually diminished. The rulers of progressive Tripura have now directed their attention towards exploration of avenues for the material and moral progress of the State. And though a beginning has been made in this direction a good deal still remains to be done. The vast hilly tracts of this State interspersed with fertile plains afford a variable mine of gold which await opening up.

The future of tea industry of the State is no longer a matter of speculation. A large number of gardens have already been opened and if the huge tracts of jungle lands are properly reclaimed hundreds of more gardens can be started. Fully convinced of the immense possibilities of the tea industry in the State, His Highness the Maharaja Manikya Bahadur has himself started a garden of his own. This praise-worthy step is expected to give a further impetus to the growth of the industry.

Scientific methods of Agriculture under the supervision of expert officers are being gradually introduced in the State and slowly substituting the old and wasteful methods of "Joom" system of cultivation. Joom system is an easy process but unless the land is very fertile "Joom" does not grow. People of hilly tracts select during midwinter particular plots and clear them of jungles and when the land is sufficiently dry, they set fire to the bushes and immediately after the first rainfall makes small holes on the ground with the help of a strong cutting knife called "Cutial" and sow handfuls of mixture of seeds of cotton, paddy, cucumber, chilly, white melon and various other fruits and vegetables. As soon as the plants germinate the land is weeded out

and as the fruits get ripe one after another they are collected. Paddy sprouts later and harvested in course of time. After paddy comes cotton. In this way without proper cultivation and supervision hill people raise several crops from the same land. The fertility of the land diminishes in course of 3 or 4 years after such cultivation and the people discard their old habitation, make for new land and carry on similar cultivation there. As such cultivation do immense harm to the forest and also produces insufficient crops the Department of Agriculture is trying their utmost to induce people to take to the plough by practical processes of demonstration. This improved method of agriculture when fully in operation will practically revolutionise the whole system with immense profit to the people as well as corresponding return to the State.

The fertile land of Tripura State abounds in a rich variety of forest products. Its jungles supply not only timber of rich value but also bamboo, canes and thatching grass which fetch a large income. The Forest Department is now under the supervision of scientifically trained officers who are trying to develop the quality as well as the quantity of the forest produce. It is also expected that with the opening of the new Rail Line the export of forest products will be less costly and therefore increase in volume.

The forests of Tripura also abound in animals which is also a source of large income to the State. No-where in India can be had such beautiful and majestic elephants as in the jungles of Tripura. To the east of the State there is a vast jungle extending over 1,000 square miles which is the chief abode of elephants. There are several places in the State where elephants are caught by "Kheda" operations. The elephant tracks are leased out yearly and dealers in elephants pay a heavy rent every year.

Another vast possibility lies in the mineral resources of the State which have not yet been tapped. As the same strata of land from which mineral oil is being raised in Assam and Burma

passes through the State area it is beleived that the hilly tracts of Tripura might contain submerged in their soil a great reservoir of mineral oil which also require tapping up. In the old historical records there is mention of the existence of gold mines in Tripura land. It is also believed that coal and other mineral products may also be found here. No serious attempts have yet been made to explore these possibilities. Who knows that efforts in these direction might not lead to a prosperous mining Industry in the State.

The State forest is also rich in valuable raw materials for cotton and paper pulp industry. The prospects of both industries are so bright that earnest efforts in the utilisation of these resources for manufacture of cloth and paper are sure to be crowned with great success. Various other industries such as wood distillation, match manufacture, umbrella handle manufacture etc. are also expected to prove profitable if properly organised. It is, therefore, not an idle dream that in the fruition of these schemes there are indications of a period of uninterrupted prosperity and allround progress.

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CHAPTER X.

THE STATE—AT A GLANCE.

Present Boundery—Tripura State is bounded on the East by the Kukee land, on the North by the district of Sylhet, on the West by Sylhet district, British district of Tippera, Noakhali District and on the South by the district of Chittagong.

Area and Position—The present undisputed area of the State is 4,116 Square Miles which lies between 22°—59' to 24°—31' N. and 91°—12' to 92°—28' E.

Description—It is a picturesque hilly country with deep jungles. There are as many as seven ranges of hills running from North to South. The ranges stand nearly 10 to 12 miles apart from each other interspersed with beautiful plains and marshy lands. There are many peaks in the ranges the highest being Betalang Shiv (9200 ft.).

Rivers and Waterfalls—A number of small streamlets pass through this State of which the *Gumti* and the *Manu* deserve special mention. The *Gumti* derives its name from the combination of *Chhaima* and *Longtorai* have their source from *Athara Mura* (Hills of eighteen peaks). This river gliding as it does through the State serves as a tributary of the big *Meghna* river. The old capital towns of Amarpur, Rangamati and Udaypur are situated on the bank of this river. There are also a few waterfalls near the origin of the river which are designated as the *Damburi* waterfall.

Population—According to the Census of 1921 the population of the State is 3,04,437 of which 68 percent are Hindus and 27 percent are Musalmans. The Hindus and Musalmans live together in perfect peace and amity. The number of population has increased considerably during the last 9 years and a fresh census could give the actual number up-to-date.

Public Instruction—There are 170 schools maintained by the State excluding 17 private institutions. There are 5 High English schools viz. Umakanta Academy at Agartala, Radha Kishore Institution at Kailasahar, Brojendra Kishore Institution at Belonia, Bir Bikram Kishore Institution at Dharmanagar and Nabadwip Chandra Institution at Sonamura all affiliated to the

University of Calcutta. There are 11 schools for girls including the Maharani Tulshibati Girls School at Agartala which teaches up to the Middle English Standard. There are 9 schools for special training including 3 Sanskrit Tols, 5 Madrasahs and 1 Technical School.

There are free boarding houses at Agartala and Kailasabar, for students from the hills.

Justice—There are 14 Courts of Justice in the State, exercising both civil and criminal jurisdiction including the Khash Adalat or the High Court with both Original and Appellate jurisdictions and 13 Magistrates' and Munsiffs' Courts exercising Original Jurisdiction only. There exists also a Privy Council to hear appeals from the Khash Adalat.

Prison—The State has 8 Jails including the Central Jail at Agartala for the accommodation of prisoners of the State.

Medical—18 Dispensaries are maintained by the State for free treatment of out door and indoor patients. There are also arrangements for free Homeopathic and Ayurvedic treatment. The Victoria Memorial Hospital at Agartala is one of the best equipped institutions in Bengal.

The Capital City—Agartala is the seat of the State Government. It is a prosperous town. Situated on the river *Howra* it commands a beautiful panoramic view as well as large volume of trade. Agartala has a municipality, the population within the Municipal area being about 8000 according to the census of 1921.

The Ujjayanta Palace—The Ujjayanta Palace is the residence of His Highness the Maharaja Manikya Bahadur. It is a commodious and picturesque mansion gorgeously decorated with valuable paintings, gold silver and ivory fittings and furniture as well as costly oriental tapestry. Splendid collection of manumental works in Bengali and Sanskrit languages and valuable addition of Vaishnava literatures and munscripts in the Palace Library have made the Palace centre of attraction for all interested in arts and literature.

The Historic Throne—The historic throne of the State is a most wonderfully made work of oriental craftsmanship. It is constructed of Ivory and used only once by a ruler during the time of installation ceremoney. The throne is daily worshipped by specially engaged Brahmins and recitation of *Chandi* is also held daily in the throne room. There is another throne of ivory and gold at the Durbar Hall of the palace.

Kunjaban—One mile north of the Ujjayanta Palace is a beutiful hillock called Kunjaban where visitors coming to Agartala make pleasant excursion trips. On the top of the hills stands the Kunjaban Palace the magnificent edifice with an attractive garden surrounding the Palace.





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